RAMDAS SPEAKS

Volume V

Swami Ramdas

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VOLUME V

SWAMI RAMDAS

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FOREWORD

All the speeches and talks given by Swami Ramdas including answers to questions during his World Tour which began on 3rd August 1954 and ended on 2nd January 1955, were first published by Anandashram in ten volumes. As a matter of convenience, the original ten volumes have been together published in five volumes. This volume covers Pujya Swamiji's speeches, etc., from 15th November to 31st December 1954 in Japan, Malaya, Singapore and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka).

The object with which the tour was undertaken is given in the address which he delivered in Bombay on the eve of his departure to Europe and published as Publisher's Note to the first volume. The circumstances in which the tour was conceived and conducted have been described by Swamiji in his book "World is God." The publication of these volumes have been made possible by the indefatigable labours of Swami Satchidananda who accompanied Swami Ramdas and took copious shorthand notes of the talks and speeches at various places.

For the story of Swami Ramdas' life before renunciation, the reader is referred to the book "Passage to Divinity" by Chandrashekhar. Swamiji, in his autobiographical volumes "In Quest of God" and "In the Vision of God", narrates his spiritual struggles and experiences and gives an account of the founding of Anandashram to spread the message of Universal Love and Service.

Anandashram P. O.

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Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram

Let your heart be ever filled with the sweetness of Ramnam.

All joy and peace to you.

Hearty Blessings

Ramdas

13. 4. 57



BELOVED PAPA, SWAMI RAMDAS
(1884 – 1963)

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JAPAN

AT THE IMPERIAL HOTEL, TOKYO.
15th November, 1954.

Meeting with Professor D. T. Suzuki

Zen Buddhism

Ramdas: Would you kindly tell us what Zen Buddhism stands for?

Suzuki: Zen was developed in China, but according to Buddhist tradition the teaching or practice of Zen is based on the historical fact that Buddha obtained enlightenment under the Bodhi tree through the practice of Zen some 2500 years ago. How we obtain that enlightenment is what Zen stands for.

Ramdas: Had Zen existed before Buddha?

Suzuki: Zen existed even before Buddha came and will exist even after the world comes to an end. Buddha was an instrument to tell us what Zen is.

Ramdas: What does it stand for?

Suzuki: It stands for enlightenment.

Zen Discipline

Ramdas: What are the means of attaining that state?

Suzuki: By practising meditation and also certain fundamental problems of religion. The aspirants meditate on these problems, like the problem of life and the problem of death. They sit for meditation cross-legged in the Indian style. This comes from India, from Buddha's teaching; but what Zen Buddhism

added to it is the Chinese way of not going away from life on earth, that is, practical life. So Zen does not despise work. The aspirants do even manual work just as farming, etc. We believe in fasting, and the Zen teachings also emphasise on limiting our wants to the minimum and doing good to others not only in the negative way but in the positive way also.

Ramdas : Do they take meat, wine and fish ?

Suzuki : No, not even fish ; but there are some sects in Buddhism which allow people to eat meat. But the Zen Buddhism does not permit it. Another thing is, when one advances on the path, he feels an aversion for meat-eating.

Ramdas : What about marriage among Zen Buddhists ?

Suzuki : No. Monks are not allowed to get married. If they marry they are not monks. If you wish to visit a Zen monastery you may go to a place called Yokohama, and near it in Tsurumi there is a big Zen monastery. Perhaps you have not visited any such temple in Tokyo. If you go to that monastery you will know what a Japanese Zen monastery looks like. Bodhi Dharma is the founder of Zen Buddhism.

Ramdas : Do you give initiation ?

Suzuki : No, I am just a layman.

Ramdas : How is it that we were told that Mrs. B. W. came to you to get initiation ?

Suzuki : Perhaps she is in some monastery. Japanese Buddhism is very different from the Chinese, Sinhalese or Indian Buddhism.

Ramdas: Buddha was against meat-eating. But in certain sects in Buddhism, people, it seems, are allowed to eat meat.

Suzuki: Certain sects do not object to meat-eating.

How Buddha Died

Ramdas: Buddha, of course, has permitted meat-eating in some exceptional cases like reasons of health, etc. It appears, before Buddha passed away, he had taken pork soup and, as a result of that, he got stomach trouble and passed away; but at the same time Ramdas heard from a friend who had read the Pali text, that it was mushroom soup and not pork. He was given a poisonous type of mushroom. Is there any truth in these statements?

Suzuki: That is the story. The Japanese interpretation is that it was mushroom and not pork. When the Japanese heard the former statement from the Sinhalese and the Chinese, they were surprised.

Tea Ceremony

Ramdas: What is the significance of the tea ceremony?

Suzuki: Tea ceremony is a Japanese custom of synchronistic movement expressing itself in tea ceremony. This synchronisation consists of putting together Shintoism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism. Shintoism that comes from Japan stands for harmony. Confucianism that came from China stands for reverence, Taoism for purity, and Buddhism for tran-

quillity. All these four principles are to be expressed during the tea ceremony. Harmony means no discord among the visitors. They will all be in a most intimate spirit of friendship. When people are too intimate, mutual reverence is often neglected. Therefore reverence for each individual is emphasised here. As for purity, everything must be kept clean, not only in the physical aspect but in the mind also. Regarding tranquillity, everything must be done very quietly and without any hurry.

TOKYO,
16th November, 1954.
At Seicho-No-Ie.

With Dr. Masaharu Taniguchi

Personal and Impersonal Go Together

M. Taniguchi: Is there a possibility of harmony between Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity?

Ramdas: In some religions you will find two aspects of God, personal and impersonal, but in some religions only one aspect. Buddha speaks of the impersonal and not the personal. Christianity speaks of the impersonal and the personal. The impersonal of the Christian and the impersonal of Buddha are one and the same. In Hinduism also we have the impersonal and the personal—Nirguna Brahman and Saguna Brahman. This impersonal is also the same as Buddha's impersonal. Buddha said that our heart must be filled with love, compassion and peace. This is personal. Buddha's form is personal. He is the personal expression of the Bodhi Sattwa. So also the impersonal of the Hindus is manifest as Krishna and Rama. Through the personal we have to reach the impersonal. Although Buddha does not preach of the personal, he is the personal form of that Nirvana or Bodhi Sattwa. Buddha is worshipped as a personal teacher or a great Master. He said that we should not worship the personal, but he himself is now worshipped. So personal and impersonal go together. When you realise that there

is one Truth or one Reality, you become the expression of that Reality.

Sadhana in Anandashram

M. T.: Do you have any special training?

Ramdas: Yes. Three things. Meditation, loving all beings, and serving all beings. Meditation with the head, love with the heart and service with the hands. For attaining concentration of mind, the method used is the constant repetition of God's name. It is called Japa.

M. T.: What is the name of the God you chant?

Ramdas: We repeat "Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram". This Mantra was given to Ramdas by his Master and Ramdas was constantly repeating it. Mantra is an incantation or a formula just like Om-Mani-Padme-Hum. This contains the name of God, both personal and impersonal.

M. T.: May I hear you chanting the name?

Ramdas: Yes. He will chant for a few minutes. The chanting creates thrills, and the mind becomes still. After repeating this Mantra, say for 10 minutes, and sitting silent, there will be no thoughts arising in the mind and the mind becomes still. The body will be forgotten and you will get that peace which is universal. This is meditation. Meditation becomes easy by the repetition of this Mantra. In the Ashram in India, we all sing this Mantra together. We have various other activities also. We are serving the poor, the distressed and the ailing.

M. T.: How do you carry on your organisation?

Ramdas : God helps. We have no money, but God sends money through friends. There are 30 or 40 persons staying permanently in the Ashram. We have thousands of devotees all over India and they are financing the Ashram and its activities.

What is Zen Buddhism ? Ramdas does not know much about it. Ramdas met Prof. Suzuki yesterday, as he is the authority on Zen Buddhism.

Meaning of Zen

A friend : Buddhism that existed previous to Buddha was called a lesser vehicle. It was established after Dharma. Zen means union or Yoga. The present Buddhism offers a very difficult question and the aspirant is asked to meditate on the question. Zen means "union with the universe through meditation."

Ramdas : Through meditation you lose yourself and become one with the universe, extinguishing your individuality. The individual sense must go. The same thing is taught in Hinduism also. They do it through prayer, through repetition of God's name, through surrender and through discrimination. All these are to remove the ego-sense and realise that you are the all-pervading Truth. The desires must die. The mind must be absolutely pure, as pure as that of a child. We must see only one everywhere. No two. The differences must disappear. We must rise above all differences, sects, religions, country, caste, creed, and everything. We must have no likes or dislikes. We must love everybody seeing the one Truth everywhere.

M. T. : That is the goal of religion ?

Ramdas : Yes.

Do not run after Miracles

M. T.: What about the Yoga of walking on water?

Ramdas: That is no good. That is only a miracle. Ramdas will tell you a story about it. Two young men went to the forest to do penance for 12 years. They underwent strict penance, performed all the spiritual discipline necessary during the 12 years. One of them wanted miraculous powers while the other wanted absolute liberation. After 12 years, when they returned from the forest, they had to cross a river near their village. The man with the miraculous powers walked on the water and easily crossed the river. The other man who had attained liberation, could not walk on the water, but he engaged a boat and crossed the river by paying, say, four yens. After both had reached the other shore, the man with the miraculous powers told the other, "I could walk on the water, but you could not." To this the other replied, "You have done penance for 12 years only to get the power by which you could save 4 yens." It is no good trying to walk on water. Try to get Nirvana, liberation or Moksha or emancipation. This is what we should get, and not the power to walk on water.

M. T.: We hear that in India there are many people who perform miracles.

Ramdas: Yes, there are some. But they are misled. We must love everybody, and should not run after miracles.

Meditation

M. T.: How do you meditate?

Ramdas: Meditation is to realise the union of the soul with the Reality. You sit cross-legged and erect.

Have your eyes' gaze on the centre of the eyebrows. Sit straight, but do not be stiff. Think of the Reality within you. He is the all-pervading, static, calm and silent Spirit. In this way you must bring into your mind His all-pervading nature and other attributes. But before doing this, it is better to repeat God's name for some time for control of the mind, so that you may get the needed stability and quietness. Generally, when you sit, your mind will be thinking of so many other things. So, give it the tactics of repeating God's name. It will quieten down the mind. As it gets quietened, it will become still, and there will be no thought. Then you realise that you are the eternal and all-pervading Existence. You also feel you are one with the whole universe. You can sit like that in meditation for one or two hours, fully merged in the universal consciousness. This is what you call Samadhi.

M. T.: What about breathing?

When Breathing stops, Mind is still

Ramdas: Automatically, breathing becomes slow and sometimes it stops. When it stops, the mind is stilled. You should not force it. There is a process by which breathing exercises are done in India. But that is not really necessary. When you start meditation, breathing becomes very, very slow and sometimes stops. In this way it will go on for a while, sometimes stopping, sometimes slowly breathing and again stopping till the mind becomes perfectly still. But Ramdas did one thing. For one or two years he was chanting only God's name. Afterwards he started meditation. By

that time the mind had attained purity and as soon as he sat for meditation, without any struggle the mind became perfectly still. He sat silent and immediately lost the body idea. It was perfect meditation. Mind was not running here and there. In fact, there was no mind at all. There was only one universal consciousness.

Why Ramdas entered Religion

M. T.: When did you begin to get into religion?

Ramdas: Thirty-three years ago, when Ramdas was 38 years old.

M. T.: Why did you enter religion?

Ramdas: God made him enter it. He drew him towards Him.

M. T.: Have you any other real reason for entering into religion?

Ramdas: No.

M. T.: How did you know God called you?

Ramdas: Ramdas felt it within. There is no other reason. If there are any external reasons in the eyes of others, they are not real.

M. T.: What were you doing before that?

Ramdas: He was engaged in some work in the world, managing a handloom-cloth manufacturing concern. One day, an intense urge came from within and he felt it was God who gave the urge. He did not think it as having come from any other source. He met some saints. He was taught that contact of saints awakens God consciousness within the aspirant. After this urge came, Ramdas had no thought of the world.

The world disappeared for him. The world had nothing to do with him. Day and night he was repeating God's name and he was mad, God-mad.

M. T.: Did you come under any religious teacher?

Ramdas: Ramdas' father gave him the formula, "Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram," and said that by repeating this Mantra, Ramdas could attain realisation. Ramdas was only repeating that Mantra and had lost all interest in life. Then he started on a tour all over India with only one cloth on. He travelled in almost all places in India and God protected him. He went to caves and jungles and sat there for meditation. He has written two books about all his experiences. So now he is God's child.

M. T.: What do you think of Japan?

Ramdas: We have not seen much of it. But we think Japan is a beautiful place. We are glad to have come here and met you all. If we had left out Japan, our tour would not have been complete. We are so happy that we came here. We had heard of Japan long, long ago, and there is a closer link between India and Japan than between India and any other country. India produced Buddha, whose religion is so very popular here. So our link has been there from the time of Buddha.

Ramdas wants to be Reborn

M. T.: What about reincarnation?

Ramdas: Yes. There is reincarnation or rebirth for those who have not reached spiritual perfection. Those who have reached spiritual perfection are not

born again. When desires are gone, one cannot be reborn.

M. T. : Do you want to be reincarnated ?

Ramdas : Yes, to tell everybody to think of God and love all. Ramdas has attained liberation and there is no need for him to come back again ; but for serving humanity he would wish to come again.

TOKYO,

16th November, 1954.

Speech at the Meeting at Seicho-No-Ie

World Religion and Brotherhood

Dear Friends,—Ramdas is very happy to find himself today in your midst to talk to you about his favourite subject, "World Religion and Brotherhood." You know there are several great religions in the world which aim at leading human beings towards the same goal, viz., the realisation of the universal Spirit which is at the basis of the universal manifestation, of which we are all so many individual parts. In the essential teachings of all the great teachers of the world, there is absolutely no difference. There is only one God who is the originator of us all, and we are His offsprings—children or manifestation of that one supreme Reality. To recognise God as our divine parent and to know that we are His children means that the differences that we have created amongst ourselves on the basis of religion, creed, nation and country, are entirely false. These differences amongst us which are the cause of mutual strife, quarrels and wars, must go, and they can go only when we live with each other in the light of the great Spirit—God—that dwells within us and create a harmonious atmosphere so that all conflicts and wars may be completely eliminated from the life of humanity.

God or Truth, by whatever name we may call that supreme Truth, is dwelling in the heart of everyone of

us and we must be conscious of this through surrender, through love and through meditation. So long as we dwell only on the material and mental planes, we cannot realise unity amongst ourselves on the basis of the knowledge of the supreme Spirit. Therefore we have to go deep down within ourselves through meditation, and in our external life surrender all our activities to the Divine force permeating the universe, and thereby realise our kinship with one another. The word 'religion' has got a meaning of its own. *Re* means "back", *ligare* means "to bind". So religion means "to bind back". We are separated from God and must bind ourselves back to Him. Through meditation and prayer we must unite ourselves with God, the universal Spirit, and then alone the distinctions between us will disappear and we shall love each other with the knowledge that we are really one in Spirit.

How to bring about Unity

So there are three ways of approach to the problem of universal brotherhood, universal oneness and kinship. These are : (1) In meditation we must realise that one Spirit pervades all beings and creatures in the world. (2) Our heart must open itself and we must love all beings on the earth as the children of one Divine parent. (3) Our actions must go to serve humanity, wherever it may be, when there is suffering, pain or sorrow. We must try our best to relieve the distress of our neighbours, our countrymen and those outside our country. We can thus expand our vision, expand our heart and also expand our soul so that we

can merge our little individuality in the universal Reality. By this achievement we enjoy immortal bliss and peace.

The happiest man in the world is he who is free from selfishness, and the most miserable man is he who is utterly selfish. This is known to everyone of us, but we still cling to the egoistic feeling which is responsible for the sense of separation among ourselves and our fellow-beings. So it behoves us to surrender our lives to the universal life, our soul to the universal soul and live and act always in terms of the universe and not of the individual. Just as a drop falling into the ocean becomes the ocean itself, so our individual life must merge in the universal life of the Divine and become one with the universal life. This is the supreme salvation, liberation, emancipation or divine realisation spoken of by great saints and sages and spiritual masters of the world.

So you have to merge your little individuality into the universal life and existence and love all beings on this earth equally without any distinction. This supreme love, which we practise, has been defined in the teachings of Buddha, Christ and Krishna. You will find the same teachings in the words of other great sages and saints of the world and they all tell us with one voice that we should put down this ego-sense and all the lower desires belonging to our ignorant nature, and rise above them, feel one with all beings and love all equally. By constant remembrance of the supreme Spirit, keep your mind perfectly still and calm and feel the existence of that Spirit within you, use your body

in doing good to everybody, serving everybody in a selfless spirit, and give your love to all beings without any distinction, so that by thought, feeling and action you live a life in which there is absolutely no selfishness and there will be a universality of vision, action. thought and feeling.

What Buddha Taught

You know how Buddha preached when he first got illumination under the Bodhi tree. Carrying the message of non-violence to the people, he said non-violence or Ahimsa means non-injury to any living being. This is a negative way of saying that you should love everybody. He went about preaching, and millions and millions of people became his followers. His message was carried even to distant places like China and Japan. In the East, you will find his religion spread so widely and all of them came under his influence because his preaching was so pure and came from an enlightened one. You must have read the book "The Light of Asia" in which the author has given the life of Lord Buddha. From that you can clearly make out that he was a great figure who came to redeem humanity and make them dwell in that state of complete freedom and attain peace which is ineffable and indescribable.

So those who are real aspirants after immortality and those who are real aspirants for the status of Nirvana and those who are anxious to reach that supreme goal of oneness with the universal Existence and those who wish to know what is at the root of that Existence, should, in the first place, control the mind,

free it from the lower desires and attain that tranquillity which is born of their union and oneness with the universal Spirit, full of peace, power, light and joy. If you want to attain this, tune your mind, through meditation and constant remembrance, with the Divine. This practice will free the mind from lust, greed and wrath.

God has given us this human life not for enjoying the pleasures of the senses but for rising above them into that realm in which we can attain perfect peace and salvation. Religion or spiritual life does not mean only sitting silently by ourselves in a state of meditation. That practice can grant us a state of internal liberation, but we must live out our life in co-ordination, in consonance with the supreme ideal we have placed before ourselves, which is that we must be pure in thought, word and deed. Then only we shall have real meditation resulting in real liberation. We should not have hatred, illwill and bad feeling towards anybody.

Ramdas' Advice to Aspirants

Ramdas believes that you are all advanced on the path of this great Reality. He has not come so much to teach you anything as to place before you the great truths you must cherish from moment to moment in order to elevate yourselves, purify yourselves, and reach that beatific state of complete absence of all low desires. To those of you who are struggling on the path and finding it difficult to control your mind, and to those among you who are finding obstacles difficult to surmount, Ramdas would advise, in the light of his

experience, that you should put yourself under strict discipline, regulate your life thoroughly, so that every part of your day is spent most usefully and in a manner conducive to your spiritual advancement. This is absolutely necessary.

We sometimes aspire for God but do something which is inimical to the object we have to attain. Therefore we must co-ordinate our external life with our inner aspiration and struggle. We must have some fixed principles to follow in our daily life. For instance, we must never tell a lie under any circumstances. We must do some kind act to somebody everyday as an act of compassion done out of pure love, without expecting anything in return. We must never fly into rage. Anger is the greatest enemy of man. When anger seizes a man he is like one who has drunk wine. Under its influence he is prone to do so many things for which he will repent later. Whenever we get angry we must take the warning and feel that we have made a mistake and should never repeat it again. When we sit silently for prayer we should bring before us our weaknesses and failings and submit them before the Supreme Power. This act will wash them away. So, we must see we do not fall a prey to lust, greed and wrath. Sometimes we know very well that we are doing a wrong thing and we should stop doing it. We do the same thing over and over again, knowing full well that the thing is wrong. That shows that we are not strong enough to control our actions and thoughts. That weakness can go only by tuning our mind with God, by constant prayer to God and meditation on

Him. By such intense practices the unholy and evil emotions that rise in our heart and mind can be controlled. If we are awakened within to the consciousness of Truth, we shall never lose our temper or act rudely towards our fellow-beings.

By prayer, meditation and remembrance of God, mind can be brought under control and freed from all evil thoughts. The mind will then become calm, still, tranquil and peaceful, and we will realise that we are one with the universal life and existence. Many of us know that when we sit silent by ourselves in a prayerful or meditative mood, our mind is wandering here and there, thinking of so many things which it ought not to think of, though the body may remain still. The mind is so fickle and agitated that we find it extremely difficult to still it. What has to be done then? Some people cry out to God that their mind is so difficult to control and that they are unable to keep it one-pointed. They therefore offer to God their entire being and by His grace get the necessary strength to control the mind. Ramdas can tell you from his own experience what helped him to attain control of mind.

God's Guidance

At the beginning, when Ramdas was trying to remember God and concentrate his mind on Him continuously, he found it very difficult. His mind was restless. He had no attraction for the things of the world. Yet the mind would run here and there. Then God suggested to him that if he could remember Him constantly by taking His holy name, it would purify his

mind and make it still. He was repeating the Mantra given to him by his father. The Mantra stood for God and by the repetition of the Mantra, gradually the wandering mind was arrested and he became tranquil. In that tranquillity, when he sat silent, his mind became perfectly still. In the stillness of the mind he felt that he was not the body but the universal Spirit, which is beyond the body, mind, senses, etc., and which is the substratum of the universal manifestation. So you find that the repetition of God's name helps to remove the superficial activities of the mind and draw it inwards to get the light, joy and peace that is within you.

Q: What have you to say about communism?

Ramdas: Communism without violence is true religion.

HONGKONG

AT SRI RUTTONJI'S HOUSE, HONGKONG
18th November, 1954.

How Confession of Sins helps

Q: Are the sins that we commit everyday done away with by confession?

Ramdas: According to the Karma theory, for whatever we have done we must either get good results or bad results. God is all forgiveness, all love and all goodness. No evil can come from Him. It is due to our sense of separation from Him that we are prone to do things for which we have to suffer. Sin is nothing but action done with this sense of separation or ego-sense. God is not responsible for it. If we approach Him for His grace and forgiveness, He is ready to forgive us and He will also grant us the necessary strength to mend our life and lead a better one in future. Very often we find that we are doing a wrong action and if we want to mend ourselves, we are unable to do so. That shows that we are weak, but if we think of God and pray to Him for His guidance and His grace, we shall derive strength to battle against these temptations and conquer our weaknesses.

Benefits of Karma Theory

Man's weakness is responsible for all his evil acts for which he later suffers. But suffering is very helpful to him in that it will lead him nearer and nearer to

God. You will find that this is true with regard to the teachings of all the great sages and saints of the world. For our sufferings or happiness we alone are responsible. If we do good we shall reap good fruit and if we do evil we shall reap evil fruit. For example, take the case of a man who is given to vicious habits. After leading a vicious life for sometime, he feels that he should turn over a new leaf. He tries to mend himself but is unable to do so. If he prays to God, God gives him strength to overcome all the temptations. Karma theory helps us in three ways. It makes us bear all sufferings patiently. We do not blame anybody else for our sufferings because we know we ourselves are responsible and the others who cause us suffering are merely instruments. So our attitude towards them remains friendly and there is no feeling of retaliation. As we know that we have to suffer for whatever wrong we do, we shall be careful to see that we do only good actions and keep away from bad actions.

Q: Do all sufferings for our evil actions come in this life itself or do they continue?

Ramdas: Sometimes sufferings come in this life and they may continue also. Sufferings are of two kinds, mental and physical. You can eliminate mental sufferings by realising the immortal Spirit within you. Even after realisation, the physical sufferings may continue, but you will be able to say then that they concern only the body. Suppose there is illness. You know it is only of the body. If there is any loss of property, which in the ordinary course ought to affect the mind, it does not affect you now.

Hell and Heaven

Q: Can you say something about the conception of hell and heaven ?

Ramdas: They are here and not outside. Mind in its own place can make a hell of heaven and a heaven of hell. A man full of worries, anxieties, fears and sorrows, is virtually living in hell, whereas a man full of joy lives in heaven. Hell and heaven are creations of the mind. We are to aim at a state of complete freedom from the mind, at something that is beyond the mind.

At present our life is like a pendulum moving betwixt a smile and a tear. Now we are happy, the next moment we are miserable; now in heaven, the next moment in hell. All these states of being are self-created God is not in any way responsible for them. If we hold on to God, we are saved; if we do not, we fall. Real happiness consists in turning our mind towards God and leading a pure and righteous life, wishing well of everybody, loving everybody and giving ourselves away for the benefit and uplift of others. This is how we can lead a life of real purity and righteousness, which will take us to the eternal state of freedom, freedom from the cycle of birth and death, freedom from hell and heaven. People ask why we are fighting in the world amongst ourselves. This is because people have forgotten God. God is a great unifying force and if we recognise Him as the indwelling Spirit, in the light of this realisation and knowledge, we shall be able to live in harmony. We have forgotten that we are all manifestations of the one supreme Spirit. God is not far away from us. He is seated in the hearts of every-

one of us. If we are conscious of Him by continuous remembrance, prayer or meditation, our life will be completely changed. All the impurities of the mind will disappear, our heart will become pure and so also all our actions. Our love will be overflowing to everybody and we shall derive true peace in the world.

World Teacher coming?

Q: Is it true that a World Teacher is coming soon?

Ramdas: If all people wish that such a great Teacher should come, he will surely come. Such Teachers come by the wish of the people. Avatars are the unmanifest Reality appearing in flesh and blood at the call of the people. You know the Sloka in the Bhagavad Gita:

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥

"Whenever there is a decline of law, O Arjuna, and an outbreak of lawlessness I incarnate myself."

Q: Does He not come by His own wish?

Ramdas: He does not come unless we call Him. God is everywhere. Just as milk is everywhere in the cow, but is available through the udder alone, so also, although He is invisibly pervading everywhere, we cannot have Him as an Avatar, unless we call Him. He is the all-pervading Truth. We can feel Him, know Him, and see Him, provided we feel the need for Him. People do not feel the need for Him. If you tell them, "This is God on the one side and that is wealth on the other side; you can take any one you choose", they will prefer only wealth.

Heredity and Reincarnation

Q: Being a Chinese I often think that we have continuation of life, etc., and thus each generation tries to do its best so that the next generation may do still better. So, life is eternal. What is your opinion about it?

Ramdas: Ramdas told you his conclusion from what he understood, felt, and realised according to the Hindu way of approach to this problem. He has explained whether there is one life or a series of lives; that before we came to this present life we had a series of lives before, and there will also be a series of lives after this life. So long as we maintain our individual sense and so long as we cling to the perishable part of us, we are caught in this cycle of birth and death.

But there is one thing. What you say seems to be a case of heredity. By handing over some of one's traits, etc., to one's son, and the son in turn to his son and so on, the traits are continued from generation to generation and we may call this heredity. Heredity may also be taken as part of the evolution necessary for the soul's progress until it reaches perfection. If one wishes to have his father reborn as his son, this often happens. We are generally reborn in places and of persons we are deeply attached to.

Is it Religion?

Ramdas is not conversant with the Chinese philosophy. He has read something about the philosophy of Lao Tzu and Confucius. He has understood the essentials of all the great teachings and they agree funda-

mentally. But there is so much discord among the followers of various religions. While God should be the uniting force, people are fighting in the name of God. In the ceremonial side people differ, but to fight in the name of God is indeed terrible. One day Ramdas had been to see the Abbot of a monastery in Switzerland. In that place one locality belongs to the Roman Catholics and another to the Protestants. Ramdas heard that a Roman Catholic cannot go in his usual dress to the Protestant area.

It is better that we do not belong to any religion. We must love all equally. Ramdas had been to many places where he visited Christian monasteries, churches and temples, and everywhere he had access because he did not belong to any particular creed, cult or religion. He is free like a bird out of a cage. If you get yourself encaged within a sect or creed, you cannot see beyond that. You are then subject to likes and dislikes and your mind is in a state of turmoil.

What is the use of saying that we belong to this religion or that? We must feel one with all beings and creatures in the world. We must love all alike. So, to which religion should we belong? To no religion. Religion means "to bind back to God from whom we have been separated." God is the universal Spirit and to bind ourselves back to Him means to realise the universal Spirit and to have universal vision. To say that this is not our sect and this is not our religion, and still to speak of God, is very strange and shows that we do not know what God is. It is said that a man who says he loves God, but does not love his neighbour, is a liar.

True religion is a religion of love and service. Love all alike, have no illwill towards anybody, be compassionate, be tolerant, bear all things calmly and cheerfully. These are the qualities of true love. If we have developed that love, we shall be ever cheerful.

What is a *Vibhuti?*

Q : Please say something about the soul and the sense of "me" and "mine".

Ramdas : The feeling of "me" and "mine" should go. It is born of the sense of separation from the Reality. 'Soul' is a word which has got many meanings. We do not know in what way we can use it. If it means the individual, it must go. When the individuality goes, still the mind has got some kind of consciousness of separation, a thin veil of separation from fellow-beings. This is called illumined individuality or illumined personality. He knows he is liberated, but still maintains the individuality. He is a vehicle. In the Bhagavad Gita he is called a *Vibhuti* through whom the Divine reveals Himself and works for the good of others. All great Souls like Krishna, Buddha and Christ had an individuality, but not the individuality as of others. An ordinary man exploits others for his own comforts. But this individuality is a purified and superior individuality which is full of light, peace and joy.

Interpretation of "God"

Q : The idea of God is individual?

Ramdas : "God" is a word which has been misinterpreted. They say that He is a personal God living

somewhere in the heavens and dispensing justice with a rod of iron. That is why some people are shy of the word "God". They say, Truth, Reality and so on. Ramdas uses the word "God" as a supra-universal Reality, who has become the whole universe and who has manifested Himself as all of us and who is the one dominating power that activates the whole universe. At the background of this power there is the calm, silent and static Spirit. You may call this Reality, Truth or God. Whatever you may call it, this is the static, calm, radiant, and all-pervading Spirit. There is only one, there are no two. But the one appears as two or many. The one is all-inclusive, all-comprehensive, and all-transcendent God. He is closer to us than any part of our being. It is He who releases us from this bondage.

Evolution of Animals

Q: Human beings can, by their endeavour, get emancipation. How about animals?

Ramdas: Animals can evolve into human beings and then struggle for emancipation. In the animal state, they cannot do anything themselves towards final emancipation. They are gradually evolved to higher forms of life and they will become human beings some day and in that state they will strive for liberation and attain it. In the animal body there is no scope for attaining liberation because animals have no sense of understanding, discrimination or intellectual power. Only man is gifted with all these things. That is why he is considered to be the head of creation. He has a

mind and intellect to distinguish the right from the wrong, and the power to reject what is wrong. He can distinguish the real from the unreal and accept what is real.

Equality of Men and Women

Q: Everything you said about man, would you apply to woman also unreservedly?

Ramdas: Yes. Equal place can be given to women also. Everybody is a form of the Divine power. All forms are only the infinite waves of the waveless ocean or the changeless Truth. They are forms of the formless. They are the external expressions of the eternal Truth. To realise the eternal Truth, we have to transcend the idea of names and forms, and when we have done so, where is the question of sex? Men and women are all embodiments of the one Divinity.

AT THE SRI AUROBINDO PHILOSOPHICAL CIRCLE, HONGKONG.

21st November, 1954.

Dear Friends,—Ramdas is going to tell you what was the purpose of his having started from India on this world tour. The purpose was the same as that for which he was touring in India itself for the last many years, from the time he got the vision of Divinity within himself and everywhere about him. From that time, through the grace of God, when he attained the realisation of the infinite existence, love, power and joy of God, he has been going about telling everybody about it, so that those who are struggling for that eternal state of bliss and peace may be helped by Ramdas' experiences which he laid before them.

Ramdas' Search for Truth

When the great awakening came to him about 33 years ago, he found that whatever he saw round about him was not stable and permanent, and therefore his search was for something eternal. This aspiration, keen and intense, seized him for realising the immortal Reality that never passes away, never changes, and never appears or disappears. He very well knew that the world before him was perishable, and to attach himself to the things of the world meant misery, pain and sorrow. Still the mind was not willing to go deep down within himself to find the Source of this life which is immortal. So, God in His infinite mercy taught Ramdas to repeat His holy name constantly. By this

practice the restless nature of the mind was curbed and he was able to keep it absorbed or lost in Divine consciousness. Then God gave him the knowledge and experience of the immortal, all-pervading, static, calm, and silent existence, and in that he was so much lost that the world ceased to have any attraction for him. In fact, for some time, the world did not exist for him. In this state of complete forgetfulness of the world and with only the holy Name constantly on his tongue, God made him leave the place and go wandering throughout the length and breadth of India.

Ramdas' Universal Vision

In the course of his wanderings he came in contact with great saints and sages, and through those contacts his mind got more and more stabilised in that higher consciousness, and he began to see everywhere, in the manifestation, one Divinity, one Truth and one Existence. In this realisation of the static aspect of the Divine, he enjoyed peace and bliss which is simply inexpressible and indescribable. In that state of perfect bliss and peace, all the desires of the flesh.had completely vanished. He not only felt that there was one Existence in the formless, but in the manifestation also he saw the one Existence and Truth, that is, the formless as manifesting itself everywhere. So the sense of duality completely left him and he began to tell everybody to dip into this infinite sea of divine Existence and lose themselves in it so that they can attain a state of perfect release, perfect freedom, peace and bliss.

Perfect Release—A Positive State

You may depend upon it, this is not a negative state, but a positive one. Naturally, by the coming of light, darkness vanishes. It is the Divine light which dispels the darkness of ignorance. This is achieved not by negation but only by positive assertion of the Divine within you, because you are the very expression or manifestation of the Divine. In this universal, all-comprehensive and all-transcendent consciousness, your ego-sense completely vanishes and there is only Truth for you and none other. You see yourself manifest everywhere. You see yourself revealed everywhere. You alone exist and there is no other, because the feeling of the other is based upon the sense of separation born of ignorance. This is found when you go deep within yourself into that infinite light and know that *that* light alone is real, and there is nothing other than that light.

What is ignorance after all? Ignorance is the sense of separation from that Reality which is our real being. So long as the sense of separation is there, we are bound to be born again and again. The sense of separation is utterly false, and it is the cause of our pain, misery and sorrow. The moment we know that we are that Reality, we are entirely free from the cycle of birth and death, fear, sorrow and anxiety. All these belong to the individual life which we superimposed on ourselves by ignorance. It is for us to break this shadow in which we have been caught. We think we are individuals, whereas we are the infinite Reality. This is what we have to find out first.

The Soul in Ignorance

Now Ramdas will try to explain to you what this ignorance means to a soul caught in the toils of this lower life. Lower life is made up of three qualities as described in the Bhagavad Gita. They are Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas—harmony, motion and inertia. In these three qualities we are caught. The question is often asked "Who am I?" I am not the body, I am not the senses, I am not the mind, I am not the intellect, I am not the heart, I am not anything that is felt or thought of. I am beyond all these. To know this we have to transcend the qualities of nature. We have to free ourselves from the tangle of the pairs of opposites such as gain and loss, praise and blame, honour and dishonour, victory and defeat, etc. All these belong to our lower nature. When we are fixed in the awareness or the consciousness of the Reality, we are unaffected by these. We remain in a state of perfect equipoise and tranquillity under all conditions. To realise this supreme goal of life, we must live in the world loving all alike, irrespective of what attitude the people round about have for us, whether they praise us or blame us. This is the sign of a man who has realised the Truth. If he is affected by sufferings then he has not found the Truth. We should rise above the three qualities and pairs of opposites, and fix ourselves in that supreme state of freedom which is the birthright of all human beings.

The Path of Freedom

To start with, we must try to give up gradually the Asuric or demoniac qualities which are responsible for

keeping our mind restless, and we should try to develop the divine qualities. When the divine nature reveals itself in us, it will make us feel for the sufferings of others and we shall have compassion and love for the suffering. Our heart will be overflowing in its love, expressing itself in spontaneous service for the relief of the sufferings of all alike. Our life will become an offering at the altar of humanity. This is why we are born as human beings. We have forgotten this and have therefore developed the devilish nature as a result of which we are trying to kill one another instead of being kind and loving. That is why Ramdas is going about telling everybody to have universal love. This can be had only when we realise the unity of the Spirit. We cannot love everybody on the physical plane and also on the mental plane. We can take only some friends in our fold because of some mental attractions. But we should know that the Spirit that pervades everywhere unites us all into one. That Spirit must be the basis of everything that we do in this world. In that you will find supreme peace and freedom. We are wrong in thinking that in grabbing and exploiting others we can make ourselves happy.

The Ideal Life

A friend asked whether the life lived in America was ideal. No. America may be rolling in riches, but it has not found its soul. Any country that has not found its soul can have no peace. It is for the fulfilment of this supreme purpose that God has granted us this human file. We forget that ideal and are toiling day and night

for the baubles that cannot come with us when we shed our bodies. We take with us only the burden of all the sinful acts we have done. This is not the purpose of our life. We must free ourselves from the tangle of Karma by feeling "I am not the doer."

Here Ramdas remembers the words of Sri Aurobindo "You may possess things, but you must not be possessed by them." You are now possessed by things and you think certain things belong to you and to you alone. A man who has got a lot of wealth is the most miserable person. How rightly it is said: "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown". You should toil for the sake of humanity, not for the sake of a few, and thereby break the fetters in which you are caught. You must love everybody and meditate upon that supreme Reality so that you can realise that you are one with it. So many people pray to God, but their outer life does not co-ordinate with their inner aspirations. If they are divergent, if they are not compatible with each other, no benefit will be derived by spiritual discipline. How can you control your mind when your outer life is not pure? You are selfish, you are grabbing and you want to do everything for your own selfish pleasures. If you go on living such a life, what benefit can you derive by meditation? You must be kind, compassionate and forgiving, and you must be pure in thought, word and deed. When you fill your mind with the name of God, you will not be able to do any evil. And even when temptations come, you will have the strength to control your mind. Now, man has become the slave of his mind and is

therefore caught up in the ignorant life, which he is leading day and night. You must widen your vision through the repetition of God's name.

Test of Spiritual Progress

We go through so many spiritual disciplines. We go to temples, monasteries, churches, and also visit places of pilgrimage. We go into solitude. All these things are done with the hope of attaining that supreme goal of life, liberation. But how far have we been successful in our attempts to achieve this goal? Very often we find that all these efforts end in frustration. If they help us to go within ourselves and commune with the basis of our life, the immortal Spirit, then our efforts will not have gone in vain. It is not by going to this place or that, we can attain our goal. It can be done only by drawing our mind inward and losing ourselves in the superconsciousness within. Otherwise, we shall be simply moving in a circle, as it were, finding no solace, no peace and no rest.

Name—the Only Remedy

Where is liberation to come from? We are all really liberated souls. We have forgotten about it, we are ignorant of it. The ignorance must go and that can go only through constant contemplation of the Divine, through constant remembrance of and meditation on the Divine within us. Ramdas finds that the mind has no existence at all. It seems to exist through some peculiar circumstances which may be called ignorance. But it seems to be an obstacle in our path,

a screen between ourselves and the Reality. When, through the repetition of the Name, the mind dissolves, we become aware of what we are. So Ramdas is prescribing this easy way of approach to that Source of our life, viz., the repetition of God's name. Ramdas never did anything else. He did so many other Sadhanas only to test how far they were efficacious, but he found no other Sadhana in any way helpful to him. He practised Patanjali Yoga, and had visions that came and disappeared. Though they gave him a glimpse of peace, when they disappeared he was again in darkness. These visions that we see are preliminary stepping-stones. We have still to go a long way. The mind must vanish completely. When we go deep down beyond the forms, mind and senses, into the depthless Spirit which we are in reality, the sense of duality completely disappears. The seer and the seen, the hearer and the heard, disappear. This is the realisation of absolute oneness through Samadhi, a state of trance, in which we rise above the body, mind and intellect, and dwell in the universal consciousness.

Need for Self-imposed Discipline

Q: When spiritual awakening comes, does one stay in that always?

Ramdas: When you feel that that awakening is waning away or fading away, you should seek the company of great souls and keep it intact. That awakening makes you go forward on the path. There are so many who got the awakening and lost it. Without proper company, proper spiritual exercises and proper discipline, one

cannot maintain it. Awakening must be there and it must be followed by proper contacts and discipline. Discipline is very important in life. Systematic life will make you walk fast on the path. Mere reading of books will not help you.

The best discipline is that which you impose upon yourself and not anything imposed upon you by others. There are so many who impose discipline upon others, but the hearts of those people, on whom such discipline is imposed, revolt. You must find out, according to your own nature, in what way you can discipline your life; the timings, the method and ways of approach, etc. All these you must write down as a schedule for your daily routine, and you must strictly adhere to it. Don't be erratic. You must progress steadily. There are certain principles to be observed. But you should not feel you are observing them simply because somebody forces you to do so. Ramdas imposed discipline upon himself according to the inner voice that spoke and guided him and he was always happy, however difficult it was. He remained at night in the thick of forests, in the midst of tigers and other wild animals; sometimes he got food and at other times he did not get any, but he did not care. He underwent all this very cheerfully because the discipline was self-imposed.

Q: Our ultimate end is freedom, and we have to be free of discipline. Discipline is therefore, the cause and the result is freedom. We start with discipline and our final aim is freedom.

Ramdas: The means is discipline and the end is freedom. A bird is caught in a cage and it struggles to be free. What is the means of attaining freedom? Breaking the cage. Discipline is breaking the cage. So breaking the cage is the means and freedom is the result or end.

Q: Breaking of the cage causes freedom, but discipline is not freedom in itself.

Ramdas: That means, if freedom is there, then there is no discipline necessary. Freedom is to be attained through discipline. So if discipline is itself freedom, then it is no discipline. It is freedom only. Discipline is a means to an end. If you want to pass your M.A. examination, you must discipline yourself, you must attend colleges, and study. All these are means to get the M. A. degree. So also, if you want to attain freedom, you have to undergo a certain discipline to break the bondage of the ego, individual sense, ignorance, or Karma. Discipline is therefore the means for freedom. If discipline is itself freedom it cannot be called discipline.

Q: Are you under any discipline now?

Ramdas: No. When you have broken the cage and come out, where is the question of breaking the cage any more?

Struggle is to know You are That

Q: Was there a cage at all?

Ramdas: To know that, discipline is necessary. If you sit in the cage and say that you are not in the cage, it does not solve your problem. You come to

know that there is no cage, only after liberation. Now Ramdas wonders why he had to do all these Sadhanas. He does not find any cage at all. He now realises that he was always free ; that he was what he is now, even before. So he tells everybody, "You are that Truth." What is there for you to do ? It is not anything new that you have to attain. Therefore it is called realisation and not attainment. Attaining something means getting something that you haven't got. For the time being, you feel you are not That, and your struggle is only to know that you are That. Suppose some dust falls in your eye and you feel irritation, you become unhappy. You go to a doctor. He removes it and you feel happy. Is it any new happiness that you have attained ? You only regained what you had before, but had temporarily lost. Somehow we feel that we are not That. Some ignorance, veil or Maya is the cause of this. When that is removed, we shall find that we were already That.

Q : The dust may fall in the eye again ?

Ramdas : No. When you realise once what you are, you are no longer caught by ignorance. You are eternally free. Your life becomes one with the universal life. There is no likelihood of your relapsing into ignorance again.

Is God a Personality ?

Q : Is God a personality ?

Ramdas : For Ramdas the personality of God is the person who has realised God. God is personal and impersonal. The impersonal Truth has revealed or

expressed itself as personal, like Buddha, who is the personification of the Reality. He is a person worthy of worship because he is the personal expression of the impersonal. The supreme Spirit is manifest in him. So we worship Buddha, keeping him before us as an ideal. So also Christ. The Father he speaks of is the impersonal and the son is the personal aspect of the impersonal. Christ says, "I and my Father are one." That shows clearly that he is the embodiment or expression of that Spirit whom he calls Father. Buddha is the personal representation of the impersonal Nirvana, Bodhi Sattwa.

Q: In what form does God reveal Himself to the realised soul?

Ramdas: In the form in which He is worshipped. God is formless. The devotee worships Him in a certain form. In that form He appears before him.

Q: Does he talk like an individual?

Ramdas: Yes. The form that Ramdas saw before him was dancing with a flute in hand.

Forms Not Important

Q: As an Indian I can believe this, but many foreigners cannot believe you when you say the Infinite can limit Himself to a particular form.

Ramdas: Some people would have it this way. When the form comes and stands before you or dances before you, you say that *that* form is the projection of the mind, because you have intensely thought of that form in your mind through meditation, and it has revealed itself before you in that particular form. This is all on the relative plane. When you reach the

absolute plane or when you want to reach the absolute plane, you do not attach any importance to these forms. They do not mean much to you. They are projections of the mind, because everything is a projection of the mind. The universe itself is a projection of the mind. It has nothing to do with the basic Reality which is only a witness to this manifestation. On the manifest aspect of the universal existence you will find all these things happening. These appear and disappear. The form of Krishna appeared before Ramdas, but he never craved for it or wanted it. He told Krishna that he would be satisfied only with the universal vision, as forms would appear and disappear, giving joy and sorrow alternately. He wanted to realise the Divine everywhere. He wanted to see the whole universe filled with the presence of the Divine. He wanted to realise the oneness of the Divine. Some people do not like to have visions of forms and therefore they do not get them. It is not necessary that everybody should see these forms. Ramdas had the vision of Buddha also. He felt happy, but he never asked for it again. He had the vision of Christ in the Himalayas and was thrilled. Ramdas did not attach much importance to these, though he wrote down such experiences.

Q : Since you say we are from that supreme Reality....

Ramdas : We are the Reality and not from the Reality.

The Inscrutable Beginning

Q : How and when did we find we are individuals?

Ramdas : We do not see the beginning of it, but it is there. How it came about and why it came, our

intellect is unable to find out, as it is too poor to gauge the way of the Infinite. But we know we are caught, and our concern is only how to get out of the cage. If we sit here and contemplate how we got into the cage, and go on thinking about the cage all the life, we shall never get out of it. So how we happened to be caught, is not the question. The intellect cannot think of the unthinkable. Intellect can understand everything except the Power that works behind the intellect, just as the tongs that you hold can grasp everything outside but not the fingers with which they are held.

AT THE SRI LAKSHMI NARAYAN TEMPLE, HONGKONG
21st November, 1954.

Universal Love and Service

Beloved Friends,—Ramdas addresses you as friends, considering you as not separate from his eternal Master, Ram, whom Ramdas has been made to see in all beings and creatures for the past 30 years or more. You are verily, for him, the embodiments of Divinity. As such, to tell you anything about the realisation of the great ideal of universal love and service seems to be superfluous. However, you have given Ramdas an opportunity to speak to you out of the fullness of his heart, because on such occasions he can express his feelings about the great Truth which has been his ideal, his idol, his aim and his everything all these years.

Pure Love the Precursor of God-Realisation

Now Ramdas will try to tell you how we can put into practice this great ideal of universal love and service. Universal love and service presupposes the realisation of the universal Truth. There is only one unchanging, all-pervading, eternal principle, which you may call God, Truth, Reality or by any name you like. Based upon the realisation of this Truth alone, we can have the universal vision from which comes the next step, viz., universal love and service. What is needed is that we should decentralise ourselves in order to attain this beatific vision. Decentralisation means reducing our ego-sense to nothing. Ego-sense is an

obsession which has no reality about it. Somehow it has caught us and we are subject to this individual sense which keeps us separated from Divinity and from His manifestation, the universe before us. Essentially, this 'I' of ours, the universe, and the great God whom we worship, are one and the same. But through ignorance we think that these three are different entities, with the result that we live in duality, which is the source of our unhappiness, misery, fear, cares and worries. If we want to free ourselves from this unhappy state, it is necessary that we should realise the all-pervading Spirit, which is our real being and existence.

Devotion the Starting Point

The first step that leads us to this great vision and experience is the constant remembrance of this great Truth through the repetition of His holy name which is all-powerful and sweet. Unless our mind becomes purified and concentrated, we cannot realise who we really are. We think man is only a bundle of sensations, a physical body of five elements and an intellectual entity. But these are only appearances. The Real Being in us is entirely different. It is the substratum of our manifest existence. If we lose sight of this supreme Truth within us, we are caught in a trap, our life becomes restless, and there will be no peace for us. Therefore it is necessary that we should constantly remember this. The easy way of keeping up this continuous stream of thought is the repetition of God's holy name.

Easy Way of Concentration

Ramdas found from his experience that there was no easier or more effective way to concentrate the mind than the taking of His holy name. When the Name is repeated, it removes from the mind all its impurities and makes the mind still. In the still state God reveals Himself and we become conscious of His existence within us. Until then, the struggle goes on. Very often we search for happiness outside. Happiness is within and God is the source of all happiness. So, to attain happiness, we must naturally tune our mind with Him through constant remembrance. So devotion is the starting point. Through devotion it is that you repeat His name, through devotion you pray to Him, and through devotion you do all actions for His sake, and then your ego-sense disappears and you ultimately realise that you and He are one. In the process you will find that your attachment for the perishable things of the world gets slackened until your mind becomes detached from the external world and gets tuned to the Divine within you to such an extent that the mind as such disappears and you become aware that you are the immortal, all-pervading, infinite Reality yourself.

This is the result of devotion offered to the Divine through constant remembrance. There are various ways of approach; some try to approach Him through discrimination, some through Yogic practices, and some by methods of Yogic Kriya and so on; but the best method is to approach Him through devotion. Bhakti is the word used in India for devotion. Bhakti means intense longing and love for God. If we have got this keen

aspiration to realise Him, our mind will always be filled with His remembrance and as a result of this it will be enlightened and will become still and calm. When we have achieved this state, we merge our little individuality in His cosmic reality and we feel one with Him. So devotion leads to Jnana, which is the realisation of our identity with Him. We are awakened to the consciousness that we are not different from the Divine. This is the second stage. From devotion you get to knowledge and from knowledge you have to go to another state which is called Parabhakti, supreme devotion, in which you behold the whole universe as the expression or manifestation of God.

Viswarupa Darshan

In the Bhagavad Gita you read in the eleventh chapter about the Viswarupa Darshan, that is, beholding everything as Divine in the vast universe. Verily, the universe is looked upon as one image of God. Just as innumerable waves rise on the ocean and all the waves are of the same water, so we are all expressions of the same infinite Truth. If we get this vision in the Parabhakti state, it fulfils completely our aspiration for the realisation of God in all His aspects ; God as the infinite life, God as infinite knowledge and God as infinite bliss and peace. The moment our ego-sense disappears in this universal vision and experience, we enjoy bliss and peace which are ineffable.

Therefore our great sages and saints in all parts of the world have been dinning into our ears not to waste this precious human life running after the ephemeral

pleasures of the world, but to seek the Eternal by which alone we can get real happiness. The quest of every creature is happiness. But where can they get such happiness? We seek for it in external things and external enjoyments. Whatever happiness we get from such external enjoyments is not stable and permanent, and is mixed with pain and sorrow Pain follows such pleasures as night follows day. To obtain real happiness we have to go within ourselves and there find our real being which is bliss itself and which we have forgotten. We should draw our vision inward and think of God so that our mind may be merged in that supreme Reality and we may experience the bliss born of immortality. This is God-realisation. This is the vision which will give us universal love and peace. Freedom comes to us as a result of liberation from the bondage of ignorance and desires. So long as we are seized by desires for the perishable things of the world, we cannot know anything about the Eternal which is our real being. We are so much caught up in the external activities. We should remember God, pray to Him, and do everything in His name; in other words, we should dedicate our lives to Him completely.

Work for God's Sake

For dedication of our actions to Him, it is not necessary that we should give up our usual occupations. We have only to do everything in His name and for His sake. Krishna never asked Arjuna to give up the work allotted to him by society and by the conditions in which he lived. He told Arjuna that he should do everything

in His name. It is equally applicable to us. This is possible only when we remember God constantly. The consciousness "I am the doer" must disappear. We must feel that we are only servants and He is the master who makes us do everything. We cannot at once jump into His being. We have to be His servants and walk on the path of righteousness, and know that we are being guided by Him. We must have His constant remembrance, and for such remembrance the easy way is to take His holy name *constantly,* not for a few minutes every day. We must keep the name of God on our lips, even when we are working, sitting or doing anything with our hands and feet. The result will be indeed wonderful. Our mind will become peaceful, and will never get depressed under any conditions. The presence of God will be always felt by us; the very remembrance of God will make us aware of His being within us, because He is the all-pervading Spirit. We do not feel His presence because we have forgotten Him. If we constantly remember Him, He is sure to be our protector and guide in every way.

God's Assurance

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥

"To those people who worship Me alone, thinking of no other, to those ever harmonious, I bring full security." The Sloka is a great assurance to us from God. What we have to do is to keep up a continuous stream of His remembrance. This is very easily done by taking His name. We do not have to do severe

austerities or penance. We have only to sing the sweet name of God, without any formality, without any rituals. Our heart will then be alight with the illumination of God, with the bliss and peace of God. In the 18th chapter of the Bhagavad Gita the Lord says, *"Sarva Dharman Parityajya . . . ."* After giving lessons on Yoga of various kinds, the Lord teaches us to surrender to Him completely and assures us that He will liberate us from all sins. The ultimate thing is self-surrender. His will is supreme. Then no kind of dejection, fear or anxiety, will ever disturb our minds. The mind will be ever in peace.

People do not know what the name of God can do. Those who repeat it constantly can alone know its power. It can purify our mind completely. No other Sadhana can do that. While the other Sadhanas can take us only to a certain stage, the Name can take us to the summit of spiritual experience. There is an assurance in the Bhagavad Gita that he who sees the Lord everywhere and everything in Him is never lost. This shows that when the devotee sees God everywhere, he has reached the natural state. There is nothing higher. That is the state of complete liberation and freedom, which is reached through the power of the Divine name.

Q: What is the difference between sleep and Samadhi?

Ramdas: Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa was asked this question and he replied: "A fool goes to sleep and returns a fool. A fool goes into Samadhi and returns a wise man." When you go into Samadhi,

you get the awareness that you are the Divine. During Samadhi you are intensely awake and aware. You are not asleep. It is not unconsciousness. It is intense consciousness.

Why Ramdas goes to the Rich

Q: Why should you stay in big hotels and not in poor men's houses?

Ramdas: You take him there and he will be putting up there. Friends arrange for his stay in a hotel and therefore he stays there. This is a general question, and it has become a common feeling with people of poor means who wish to accommodate Ramdas in their houses. If Ramdas stays with them, they will not be able to give the necessary facilities for all the people who come to see him every day. If Ramdas stays with a rich man he will be able to do that, to make elaborate arrangements for Bhajans, meetings and talks, and also to take Ramdas to meet various devotees. Another reason is that if he stays with the rich, he can make them open their purses for the service of the poor, and at the same time make them see the sufferings of the poor.

SINGAPORE AND MALAYA

AT THE GANDHI MEMORIAL HALL, SINGAPORE. 26th November, 1954.

Spiritual Awakening

Beloved Friends,—Ramdas stands before you as a humble servant of God. By His will this servant left India about three months ago on a world tour, purely on a spiritual mission, to propagate the ideal of universal love and service. Ramdas speaks in the third person, and you will kindly bear with him. About 33 years ago, after he was made to pass through severe austerities continuously taking the Divine name, one day he found he could not say "I". From that time he has been speaking about himself in the third person. Ramdas left India and visited Europe, America, Japan and Hongkong. Since he does not belong to any particular community, creed or sect, he was able to go freely to all spiritual centres in all these places, presided over by great souls and saints. He had the pleasure of visiting a Catholic monastery in Switzerland and another in France, and also of seeing and spending some time with a Sufi saint. He visited many churches and met many Christian priests. He also went to many Hindu temples and other spiritual centres. Everywhere he found thousands of people, adhering to these spiritual institutions, who are engaged in spiritual discipline for the realisation of the Divine, as they know that by realising the Divine they can spread peace and goodwill

in the world. Ramdas found all over the world a spiritual awakening. The present time is such that we should have a divine consciousr.ess.

Way to achieve Peace

Through the awareness of the Divine alone we can bring about true peace in the world. No doubt effort is being made by great leaders of the world on the material plane to bring about peace and harmony ; but Ramdas does not see any trace of their success. The only way left for us is to turn our mind within ourselves and find out the true and everlasting basis or source from which alone we can get true happiness and peace in the world. The basis is God who is dwelling in the hearts of everyone of us. He is the universal Spirit. If we so adjust the conduct of our life as to mutually help each other and look upon all as children and offsprings of the Lord, then alone there is hope of our bringing about amity and avoiding the war that is threatening us. We saw in Germany how much destruction was wrought during the last war. The same is the case in France and Holland. The world has suffered intensely during the last war, and to avoid another war is possible only if everybody thinks of God. If we constantly remember Him, He reveals Himself within us. He is a tremendous force that will release a powerful influence in the world, making war absolutely impossible. Therefore the one message which Ramdas has given to all the people in the world is "universal love and service". This can be practised on the basis of the universal Reality—God. As we turn our mind towards God, we

shall be turning away from low passions, desires and aspirations. Gradually our desires will disappear and we shall learn to love each other on the basis of the universal Spirit that activates us every moment of our life. We are unconscious of that Spirit and therefore we are hating each other.

Buddha, Christ, Krishna, Mohammed and so many other incarnations and saints of the world have been proclaiming that we all should live in mutual love and harmony. We must realise the Divinity that is residing in the hearts of everyone of us, and in the realisation of the Divinity we must live as friends. That is the only way by which we can bring about peace in the world. Otherwise we shall be heading towards another war, although there is no chance of another war. We are already fed up with the last two wars.

There is so much agony caused to the people in the world on account of war. A kind of panic has seized mankind everywhere. They dread the mere idea of another war. Many saints and sages in the world are trying to create an atmosphere which will make war impossible. We on our part should contribute what we can towards this end. We can do it only by having the thought of God. God is omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent. If we intensely wish that there should be no war in the world, by His grace our wish will be fulfilled and we shall be able to attain the state of peace and harmony here and now.

Mahatma Gandhi's Example

Ramdas wishes to speak on this occasion a few words about Mahatma Gandhi in whose name this

beautiful building has been erected. Mahatmaji was a lover of God and a lover of humanity. A man who says that he loves God and does not love humanity is a liar. If we have real faith in God and love God, we must love our fellowbeings. Otherwise we are not sincere in our love for God. Therefore Mahatma Gandhi was a lover of humanity. Essentially he was a saint. His life fully bears out what a spiritually illumined saint he was and we can take so many lessons from his life. One lesson we can learn is that he never forgot God. On the basis of that spiritual force which he realised by contact with God, he was able to bring freedom to India and also to a vast number of human beings in the world outside India. Ramdas had heard in many places that he is looked upon by thousands as a great saint and his spirit of non-violence has a great message for them all.

Non-violence is another word for love. If we really love everybody we shall have no illwill towards any one. We shall have no enmity or hatred. Buddha preached that we should give love for hate. Gandhiji preached the same thing. We have to follow his footsteps if we are to be really useful in the world, and serve humanity with all love and in a selfless spirit. Mahatma Gandhi taught us how we can purify ourselves in order that God may make us His instruments to serve humanity. Selfless service alone counts. Any service done out of selfishness is of no value. Real value lies in doing things selflessly. Selflessness can come only when we have inner illumination. Through union with God we find light and joy within, and when

we are thus illumined we can really serve others without expecting anything in return. When we are free within, our actions can never be selfish. So, to have illumination within and to act selflessly, we have to purify our mind.

Take God's Name constantly

For purification of the mind, the easiest method, as Mahatma Gandhi and all other saints have taught us, is to repeat the holy name of God. God's name is all-powerful. By repeating the Name constantly we would become pure in heart, pure in actions and pure in thought. We must continuously and ceaselessly keep the remembrance of God in our heart. People may think how they can remember God when they are working in the world. It is quite possible. Our heart can be with God while our hands and feet are working in the world. Ramdas remembers, in this connection, the words of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa who says that we must work in the world with one hand and keep the other hand at the feet of the Lord firmly, and when our work is over, we must catch hold of His feet with both hands. So we can be in contact with Him and still work in the world, doing always the right thing and never going wrong, never trying to harm our fellow-beings, and never exploiting them. So the one way by which we can keep communion with God is to take His name constantly. Ramdas found for himself that there was no easier way for concentrating his mind upon God and getting the awareness of the Divine presence within and everywhere about him than the repetition of God's name.

This is the message he carries from place to place, because people say it is very difficult to meditate on God, to retire into solitude and go through severe austerities. It is very easy to take God's name. When you are free from work, even though for a short time, you can take God's name every day either sitting quiet in a place or moving about. If you practise this every day, you will be able to maintain the repetition even during your work, and that will lead you to continuous repetition. Your mind at once gets absorbed in the higher consciousness, when it has been stilled by proper purification through the repetition of God's name, and you get that universal vision which is essential for universal love and service. We shall become the true instruments in the hands of God for doing good to others in the real sense of the term.

Do not Kill out of Hate

Q: How does non-vegetarian diet affect man's character?

Ramdas: From the experience Ramdas has gained by going over all countries of the world for the past three months, he finds that nearly 95 per cent of the population of the world are meat-eaters. As for Ramdas, he is not a meat-eater, but he does not condemn meat-eating. For those who are on the spiritual path and want to develop devotion for God, it is better that they do not eat meat, because meat is a Rajasic food.

Q: Are we not killing animals if we want to eat meat? And are we not responsible for protection of the animals?

Ramdas: Are we not killing lives even if we eat pure vegetables? You must have heard of Dr. Bose who found by experiment that everything in the world has life. Even vegetables have life. He demonstrated by an experiment that a plant manifested joy when a sugar solution was injected into it, just like a man who is eating sweets. When he injected a kind of poison, the plant immediately started showing signs of agony, as a man or animal would do before death, and gradually faded and died. So we see clearly that there is life in everything in the world and we cannot decide what to eat and what not to eat. It is difficult to draw a line of demarcation. We say we are the head of the creation. We must avoid massacring or killing out of hate. Animals kill other animals for the sake of food, but human beings range themselves against each other for waging wars out of hatred. If we stop these wars, there will be so much misery averted and so much happiness created in this world. We have in India the problem of cow protection. But if we go to the households of Hindus who profess to worship cows, we see how miserably they are kept. They are not taken proper care of. First let us look after the animals which are under our care and charge. In Europe and America people do not talk about vegetarianism. It may not be possible for them because they are used to non-vegetarian food. In Kashmir, you will find even Brahmins eating meat, because of cold weather, perhaps. We cannot have a hard and fast rule applicable to all people on this globe. It is a matter of habit, custom and need.

AT THE SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, SINGAPORE.
27th November, 1954.

Homage to Sri Ramakrishna

Dear Friends,—After the inspiring speech of Swami Veetasokanandaji, Ramdas does not feel that he is fit enough to address you on religion. 'Religion' means 'rebinding ourselves to God.' We have been separated from Him and we should bind ourselves back to Him. But Ramdas is not going to dilate upon this subject.

In the first place he feels extremely happy to find himself in this beautiful building which has been dedicated to Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. Ramdas has been told that the donor of this building is Sri G. P. He has indeed done a great service to humanity in the name of Ramakrishna in making this donation for the construction of this building. Ramdas has to say also a few words about what he saw when he was taken round to see the work done in the school, dormitory, and other places here. The work is done wonderfully, in a selfless spirit, as dedication to God Himself. Friends who come here should offer more and more monetary help to make the work of the Mission a success in every respect, especially in serving the distressed, the needy and the orphans. It is not a centre merely for service, but it is a centre of spiritual knowledge as well. Here you get spiritual inspiration and guidance.

Sri Ramakrishna's Influence on Ramdas

It is in the fitness of things that, having come here, Ramdas should speak a few words about Ramakrishna

Paramahamsa, the great incarnation. All people look upon him as an incarnation. He was a veritable embodiment of Divinity. When Ramdas was young, attending school, he read the life and teachings of this great soul. From that time he had developed a fascination for this divine personality. The impression thus formed was silently working in him, and he was feeling that to live a life just like the dumb driven cattle was not the object of this life, and that we had to strive for the eternal verities of life so that we could evolve to a state of complete union with the Divine, who is at the basis of the manifestation before us. This impression took a deep root until it came to a climax in 1922. That year he was called upon to leave everything for the sake of God and take to a wandering life.

In the course of his wanderings God took him to Calcutta and from there he made his way to Dakshineswar. He reached Dakshineswar at night, and the next morning he was eager to see the room in which Ramakrishna lived. Fortunately a Sannyasi, who was present there, took Ramdas to the room, and as soon as he entered it, he felt inexpressible ecstasy. He could not stand it. He rolled on the floor, which had been blessed with the holy feet of Sri Ramakrishna. He was so much taken up with joy that he lost consciousness of the body and lay on the floor, still and calm, for some time, until he got up and left the place in an almost dazed condition. That was the first touch he got of the Mahatma. His presence was intensely felt when Ramdas entered the room. After that he was

going from place to place, but that impression, that thrill he experienced at Dakshineswar, remained with him and remains with him even now, and when he thinks of that time he feels he is there. Even afterwards Ramdas visited Dakshineswar two or three times, and felt the same inner peace and calmness that he first felt. From what Ramdas has told you, you can form an idea what an inspiring personality Ramakrishna was. Ramakrishna is the Master of all those who want inspiration from him and surrender themselves to him in order to develop an inner personality which will take them to the highest state of God-realisation. He will guide you by the hand as the mother does her child. He is not an ordinary human being or Sadhu. He is a Divine incarnation. Ramdas looks upon him as such and he has taken this opportunity to pay his humble homage to him.

Sri Ramakrishna's Greatness

The most endearing trait in him was his childlike nature. "Unless you become like children you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." You should be childlike and spontaneous in everything you do. Ramakrishna was a child. It is rightly said that God is like a child. Ramakrishna was always simple, always overflowing with love and was giving himself away for others. God is all kindness, forgiveness and love. He is not merely the form that you see in the centre here. He is the all-pervading, eternal Reality, and to be one with that Reality you should approach through this great personality. Unless you have got a personal expression to represent that Reality, you cannot reach the

impersonal aspect of the same Godhead who is the Master of the universe. So every saint should be looked upon as the embodiment of Divinity and not as a mere human being bound down by time, space and causation. The saints are beyond all these things. They are the representatives of the universal Truth, the universal Reality and also expressions of That. It is said that the universal Spirit has condensed itself into human forms as saints and sages. We should look upon them as such. Then we get from them the right kind of spiritual help and inspiration. Ramdas looks upon this great Avatar, Ramakrishna, as such.

Swami Vivekananda's Work

Then again Ramdas cannot conclude the talk about Ramakrishna without making mention of his dearest and greatest disciple, Swami Vivekananda. When Swami Vivekananda went to America to address the Parliament of Religions, he virtually electrified the world. At that time Ramdas found that the message of Vedanta which Vivekananda delivered in America was accepted by the world. Our Upanishads (Vedanta) stand for the loftiest realisation of the Divine and you will find the same truth preached in all religions. Essentially, all religions say the same thing.

The Message of Vedanta

But what is the character of Vedanta? Vedanta takes you to the highest goal and makes you know that you are God Himself. सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म— "Verily, all this universe is Brahman." This is the message of Vedanta.

Of course, through Bhakti Yoga and through many other Yogas you reach the same Truth. But direct approach is taught by the Upanishads, which say, "You are He". You are not anything other than that supreme Spirit which pervades everywhere and expresses itself as the universe before you. The sense of duality completely disappears in this state of Advaitic realisation.

The Bhagavad Gita

The Bhagavad Gita preaches the three Yogas of Bhakti, Jnana and Karma. In that, Vedanta belongs to Bhakti Yoga, Sankhya belongs to Jnana Yoga and Tantra belongs to Karma Yoga. Ramdas has divided the Bhagavad Gita into three. Vedanta is to realise everything as Brahman. To realise this supreme vision and experience, through Jnana or Sankhya meditation is necessary. You realise your oneness with Him as the impersonal Reality and based upon this knowledge of the Atman you see the whole universe as the expression of that Spirit. Even after that, as you will find in 18th chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, 'सर्वे धर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज', there is yet another stage which is called the state of complete self-surrender. That surrender is the conclusive word of the Gita. Surrender is the way by which we can free ourselves completely from the ego-sense. The ego-sense possesses us and creates all sorts of complications. Therefore, when we are doing any action, we should know we are not the doers and the Divine within is the doer. It is by the power of the Divine that we are doing everything. Then only we can be free from the ego-sense. Everything

happens by the power and will of God. If we realise this truth, we shall do everything in a spirit of spontaneity and enjoy bliss and peace. Jnana is all right when you are not active, but when you enter into activity you seem to be doing things by your own strength and power. Even this must disappear. That can go only when you surrender yourself to the Divine power everywhere.

How to become Childlike

This is the secret of the Sadhana performed by Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. He was the child of the Divine Mother. The Divine Mother is the Divine Shakti responsible for all the manifestations and activities. That power is the one deity to which we have to surrender ourselves completely and then free ourselves from the ego-sense. When we are free from the ego-sense, we shall become childlike. To be childlike is not to be childish. We must be entirely free from lust, greed and wrath, and from the pairs of opposites such as likes and dislikes. We must be pure in thought, word and deed. Our purity must be like that of crystal. The idea of sex must be transcended and we should see no difference between man and woman. This is possible only when we do not see diversity but perceive the whole world as the manifestation of the universal Spirit.

Then we are one with everybody. In that oneness all distinctions are lost. We develop a childlike nature in which we live always in bliss and peace. This is called *sahaja avastha,* or the normal state. Man is generally in an ignorant state which is his abnormal

state. We have to regain that normality. That is possible only when we develop spiritual power, spiritual knowledge and spiritual vision. These are the things we have to develop until our ego-sense completely disappears and we become embodiments of Divinity. The Bhagavad Gita leads us to this vision and experience. So we must be one with the formless, all-pervading Truth through Jnana, and then behold the whole universe as the manifestation of that supreme Truth within us, and love all beings equally, because in that vision our love flows out to all alike, and lastly we must do everything in a state of surrender to the Divine power. In this way Bhakti, Jnana and Karma, must form the complete experience of spiritual life. The intellect, heart and body must work together. The dynamic and static aspects of God are together and we have to realise this which is called the Purushottama. We must live in this world doing all things as if we do not do anything.

Sri Krishna's Message

This is the message Sri Krishna delivered to Arjuna on the battlefield, viz., to fight in the battlefield as if not fighting at all. We are doers and non-doers at the same time. As the all-pervading Truth or Brahman, we are not doing anything, but as Prakriti, the dynamic aspect of Truth, we are doing everything. This is the knowledge, experience and realisation of the three aspects of Divinity—dynamic, static, and that which is beyond dynamic and static. To reach this state of God-realisation, saints and Avatars like Sri Ramakrishna guide, inspire, and lead us.

Q : Was there any special reason for the change in your life in 1922 ?

Ramdas : The only reason was that God's grace came to him. Everything happens by His grace and if we know this we shall not have to search out for reasons for things that happen.

Q : What made you start on this world tour ?

Ramdas : The previous answer is the answer to this question also. By God's will Ramdas started on the tour. By God's will he visited various places. By God's will he has come here and by God's will he is leaving this place for Kuala Lumpur tomorrow.

Let us follow His Plan

Q : Is everybody's life predestined ?

Ramdas : God's ways are mysterious and we cannot understand what God is going to do the next moment. We should surrender ourselves to Him and never worry how He has planned our life. Otherwise, we are liable to speculate the wrong way and thereby hinder our own progress. Let Him do what He thinks best for us. We should be happy in whatever situation He places us.

Q : According to the Gita, God is the doer. He is the Master of the universe. People have tried to change the course of their lives. Actually some astrologers forecast what their life was going to be and they were determined to change the course of their life and it was possible for them to do so.

Ramdas : Perhaps God had planned it that way for them.

Q: So it is true that God has already planned everybody's life.

Ramdas: It is quite possible, but let us not try to understand it. Ours is only to follow the plan He has chalked out for us. We have been all along travelling round the world and between Hawaii and Wake Island we lost one day. Further, we have been turning our watches back every now and then. Let us not be caught in the changing time. Tomorrow would not be seen by anybody. Yesterday nobody saw. So these time factors are false. Let us try to transcend time and live in eternity. Because all these problems are related to time, let us not bother about them.

Dvaita and Advaita are one

Q: Why should there be conflicts between the Dvaitic and Advaitic followers?

Ramdas: There should not be. Dvaita and Advaita are only stages of progress in our spiritual evolution. We start with Dvaita, then we reach Visishtadvaita and then Advaita. We can be one with God, we can be separate from Him, and we can be in Him and He in us. All these aspects belong to the same kind of realisation and we need not see any contradiction among the three. A devotee, although one with God, wants to remain a devotee to praise Him, sing of Him, and be happy.

AT THE BUDDHIST UNION, SINGAPORE.
27th November, 1954.

Lord Buddha's Guidance

Dear Friends,—Ramdas has nothing new to tell you about Lord Buddha. He was a Mahatma who is known all over the world, and it is said that he lived more than 500 years before the birth of Jesus. From that time his name and fame have been spreading in all parts of the world. Wherever we go, we hear of Buddha's greatness. He was a great teacher of humanity. Humanity is beholden to him for guiding it along the path of righteousness. This is the main object of his advent into the world. He taught by his own example how one should live one's life. He was a great prince. He renounced everything, went to the forest, performed severe austerities and at last realised the hollowness of this mundane life, and he taught that by detaching oneself from worldly aspirations one can go within oneself and find inner release in that state of Nirvana which grants us absolute freedom and peace. Ramdas is going to tell you what he wanted us to do in order to reach that state of perfect peace and liberation. He said that we should be pure in thought, word and deed. By leading such a pure life, we shall be able to achieve the final goal of liberation. Karma is at our back, because we are thinking that we do everything ourselves. The ego-sense is responsible for our bondage. The ego-sense must disappear and we must realise that we are not merely a bundle of

senses and the physical body composed of the five elements, but are the supreme Reality behind all these apparent things. Then alone we can find release.

That state of release is indefinable, and therefore Buddha did not try to define it. Therefore he has stated, in the words of Edwin Arnold, "Do not dip the string of thought into the unfathomable. He who questions errs and he who answers errs." So he could not describe what that state is. In the Hindu philosophy also we have got a state described as Moksha which means liberation. That state also is indefinable. We can define it only by negation and not by any positive assertion. It is a state of release from the bondage of the flesh and from the bondage of Karma and desires.

The Ten Evils

To attain that supreme state Lord Buddha had taught us to be pure in thought, word and deed. What is meant by purity in thought, word and deed? He said there are ten kinds of evil which we are prone to do in our life; three of the mind, four of the tongue and three of the body. Three of the mind are envy, wrath and scepticism, four of the tongue are lying, slander, gossiping and abusing, and three of the body are killing, stealing and adultery.

Lying: We must never tell lies but always speak the truth. Slander: Slander means talking ill of others. This is very common. We must see only the good qualities of others and praise them rather than pick out the faults and talk ill of them. If we think or talk ill of

others, we shall increase the evil within us. If we think and talk well of others we shall decrease the evil within us and increase our good qualities. Gossiping : We are prone to use our time in useless talk. We must use our tongue only when necessary and that too for the right purpose. Abusing : Using bad words must be completely eschewed. We must never use the tongue for speaking ill of others, condemning or abusing others.

Killing : We are causing injury to others. This is called Himsa. Buddha's main preaching was : *Ahimsa paramo dharma*—meaning : 'non-injury to others is the highest Dharma.' Buddha's heart was filled with compassion. Soon after he got illumination, he found a lamb limping. He took it on his shoulders and carried it. He saw a bird falling down, hit by an arrow. He lifted it, fondled it and felt sorry for it. When you are filled with compassion, you do not feel like causing injury to anybody. Then comes stealing : We take others' property. Instead of stealing others' property you must give to others what you have, so that they may be satisfied with what you give. Even the wish to have something belonging to another amounts to stealing. Suppose a man has got something with him and you wish to have it. It means that you have committed the theft. Mere feeling is enough to make you a thief. So to that extent our mind must be pure. Adultery : One must be faithful to one's wife and lock upon all other women as one's mothers. This is for those who are leading a family life. But those who are monks and have renounced everything for the sake

of the Dharma preached by Buddha or other saints and have dedicated their lives to the service of humanity, should never look upon any woman with a lustful eye. They must look upon woman as their own mother. This must be the attitude. This is called Brahmacharya.

Nirvana

When we become perfectly pure in thought, word and deed, and in that state of purity sit for meditation, our mind dissolves itself within a short time and we go deep down and realise that we are the supreme, all-pervading, static Spirit. This is the state of Nirvana which is reached by transcending all planes of life. According to Hinduism five Kosas are mentioned. In Buddhism you find five stages of meditation until you go into the state of Nirvana and feel that you are an illumined soul.

The Perfect Yoga

Now Ramdas will tell you something about Yoga. Yoga means union. It is the joining of the soul with the Oversoul, the individual soul with the universal Soul. Yoga must mean the mind's disappearance and the realisation of the ultimate Reality which you are. It is only a disappearance of the screen between you and the Reality. As soon as it is removed, you feel you are one with the Reality. There was no duality at all. It was a misconception or illusion. You must free yourselves from the illusion. In fact, Reality is the only thing that exists and all the other things that appear to be existing will pass away, as they are impermanent. Edwin Arnold uses a beautiful phrase in

translating the teachings of Buddha : "The dew drop slips into the shining sea and becomes the sea itself." So the individual self merges in the universal Self and becomes the universal Self itself.

Yoga, as described in the Bhagavad Gita, is of three kinds. They are Bhakti, Jnana and Karma. In fact they are not three different Yogas but three aspects of one Yoga, because Bhakti Yoga relates to the heart, Jnana Yoga relates to the intellect and Karma Yoga relates to the body. Jnana Yoga is the one which is predominantly preached by the Buddhist faith, but it is accompanied also by Bhakti Yoga. Bhakti Yoga is not Bhakti or devotion given to a personal ideal but devotion to the whole humanity. What Buddha did was to love and serve everybody. Buddhist Bhikkus have dedicated their lives to the attainment of this Dharma. Those who have taken refuge in these three Yogas are the lovers of humanity. When they see suffering anywhere they rush there and see that relief is given to the sufferers. That means that their intellect is full of wisdom and their heart is filled with love. So when our actions are done for the relief of the distressed in the world, with our heart overflowing with love for all beings, and our intellect established in a state of static, calm silence, we realise that we are one with the universal Spirit which is the basis of this manifestation.

So Yoga is a way of approach to the Divine realisation, which is complete and in which we find eternal wisdom, infinite love and infinite power working through us for the good of humanity. So our body, in all its being, inside and outside, must be a comprehensive

vehicle through which God's power, love and wisdom, are revealed in completeness and perfection This is the purpose of life. This is what Buddha, Krishna, Jesus and all the other great teachers of the world have been teaching us. This is not a partial realisation. This is the all-inclusive realisation in which all parts of our body are used for the complete elimination of the ego-sense and desires, and for attaining a state of beatitude which is without name, form, denomination, beginning or end, and which is simply indescribable.

Prerequisite for Meditation

Some people sit for meditation and think that they are meditating on the Reality. But when they are active in the world, their actions do not bear out that they are seeking the Truth. Their actions cause more evil to others than good and yet they call themselves devotees of Truth. They cannot concentrate their mind. They may sit silently for meditation, but their body alone is seated there, while mind is roaming about here and there. This is because their mind is not pure. To purify the mind, as Ramdas found, the best way is to repeat the name of God. That helped him to concentrate his mind on God. All actions must be done in a selfless spirit and that will help to purify the mind. When the mind has attained absolute purity, the mind as such disappears. It is not mind then. It is pure consciousness. It is then that we go within ourselves and sit in silent ecstasy and peace.

For the followers of Buddha, Ramdas would say, Buddha's name alone would do to purify their mind,

because they cherish, through the name, Buddha's great ideal. That ideal will surely reveal itself in their heart and destroy all the darkness and desires of all kinds in the mind, making it perfectly pure. Ramdas can tell you in this connection, that he was a great admirer of Buddha. His ideals were Buddha, Krishna and Christ. He used to carry with him, during his first wandering life, the three books, The Light of Asia, the Bhagavad Gita and the New Testament These three books inspired him all through and kept him always on the path and never allowed him to go astray. He felt safe on the path by the guidance of these great teachers.

Visions experienced by Ramdas

Now Ramdas will tell you that he had also the visions of these three great teachers. This is strange. Ramdas never wanted Krishna, Christ or Buddha to come to him in any form, but still they appeared before him. In a cave, when he was sitting in Mangalore, he had the vision of Buddha. Buddha's face appeared before him, calm, serene, and in a state of meditation. His eyes were closed and in that serene face he saw the light and peace which haunted him for days and days together. Even now when he thinks of the vision, that face comes before his mental eyes. Again Ramdas had the vision of Christ in a cave in the Himalayas. He was undergoing a fast for five days, living only on water, and had absolutely no sleep. The whole night he was sitting in meditation, taking God's holy name. At that time, Christ's figure came before him. The

first vision Ramdas had was that of Krishna, before he was made to renounce everything and go as a mendicant all over India. It was in 1922 that Krishna came to him and danced before him. At that time Ramdas prayed that he did not want to have such visions. He wanted to see Krishna in everything and not in one particular form, as that would bring him pain and sorrow when that form disappeared.

In response to his prayer he was taken to a place where he met a great saint, Ramana Maharshi. After that he went up the hill of Arunachala and remained in a cave for 21 days under strict discipline. When he came out one morning, he could see only light everywhere, and he found the Lord had fulfilled his wish. He was mad of God in those days, and this vision gave him supreme ecstasy. He went about embracing anything and everything he saw, even the rocks and trees. To hate anybody is impossible for one who is gifted with the vision of God everywhere, because he sees oneness everywhere. He does not see any difference between himself and others. Therefore he is made to love everybody without hate. Hate has no place in the life dedicated to God, and by such dedication one realises the presence of Divinity everywhere.

When you have attained this blessed vision, you will rise to the exalted state in which there is no sorrow or desire of any kind. Where is the place for desires there? You are enjoying bliss all the 24 hours, without any effort to maintain it. This is what is called the Buddhahood, a state of liberation in which there is no sense of duality. So Ramdas was a child

of these great spiritual masters of the world, and by their guidance and grace he grew up, and he is sitting before you to tell you that Buddha is his ideal, Buddha is his master, just as Krishna and Christ are. Buddha had played a prominent part in Ramdas' life, So today Ramdas has spoken about Buddha and the Yogas described in the Bhagavad Gita.

So let us all be gratelul to that great Avatar, Buddha, who came to the world for the redemption of mankind. May his grace ever pour on us and ever shine in our hearts and may his blessings be ever upon us !

AT THE VIVEKANANDA ASHRAM, KUALA LUMPUR.
28th November, 1954.

How to Realise God

Beloved Friends,—Ramdas never expected he will have to address you on this occasion because we have just arrived here from Singapore. It is a joy to meet you all in this hall in the building which is erected in the sacred and holy memory of Swami Vivekananda. The chief object of human life, you all know, is to realise God. What we have to do to realise God is that we must be devoted to Him in thought, word and deed. Our mind must constantly think of Him, our tongue must constantly chant His holy name, and our actions must be done in a spirit of dedication to Him. In this way we shall be able to attain perfect purity in thought, word and deed, which is essential for God-realisation. This is the summum bonum of human life. To achieve this goal is the most important thing in our life. If we run after the pleasures of the senses, we do not gain that joy and peace which the soul hungers for. Therefore the fulfilment of human life lies in the attainment of eternal happiness and peace which can be had only through realisation of God who is, as our great saints and sages say, "Satchidananda"—absolute existence, consciousness and bliss. This great Truth, this great Spirit or this great God is ever dwelling in our hearts, in the heart of everyone of us. We need not go in search of him to far off places. He is in us and everywhere about us. If we become conscious of this by

constant remembrance, by constant meditation and constant thinking of Him, we will realise Him.

As a man thinketh so he becometh. At present we are fully absorbed in worldly activities and in pursuit of perishable things of the world. By so doing we shall never be able to feel His presence with us. From time to time we must withdraw our mind from the external activities and commune with Divine within us, and by such practice, in course of time realise His presence everywhere about us. To see Him everywhere is the object of this great aspiration or effort. God is not far away from us. This is what we have to believe before we embark on the path of God-realisation. It is no doubt difficult, but at the same time it is easy because we have to get nothing from outside. We have got it already with us. He is with us and He is our real being. We have only to become conscious of Him, aware of Him. For that we must be true to Him in everything we do, and that is the only way by which we can approach Him and make our life blessed.

AT THE VIVEKANANDA ASHRAM, KUALA LUMPUR.
28th November, 1954.

Under the auspices of the Divine Life Society, Kuala Lumpur.

Swami Sivananda

Dear Friends, — The function that is being held now is on behalf of the Divine Life Society, Kuala Lumpur, started here in the name of Sri Sivananda Saraswati of Rishikesh. The Divine Life Society has branches in many parts of India, Europe and other countries. Swami Sivananda is a great Mahatma who is spreading his spiritual power all over the world in order to awaken the hearts of people to the real meaning of life and awareness of God. We have heard that he has written many books in order that people, by reading them, may be enlightened. He also publishes several journals which go to every corner of India and abroad, and people are immensely benefited by reading them.

Before we started on this world tour, we wrote to Swami Sivananda for his blessings, and he was gracious enough to send his blessings for the success of the world tour. By his grace and blessings and also by the grace and blessings of many other saints of India, we have been successfully carrying out the task which God has entrusted to us, namely, the propagation of the ideal of universal love and service. Swami Sivananda has dedicated his life to the service of humanity. All great Vibhutis of God are in the world in order to awaken

people to the awareness of God and to bring them closer to God and enable them ultimately to realise Him. Therefore their lives are dedicated to the service of humanity and they do not spare themselves in this task.

In the course of our tour, it is a joy to us to be in your midst today and to talk to you on the divine mission with which we started from India. The chief object of human life, as we have been told by all sages and saints in all parts of the world, is to realise God and to attain that state of perfect bliss and peace which our soul hungers and thirsts for. People belonging to various cults, creeds, religions and sects, are all striving their utmost to realise this goal, to reach this supreme end and aim of life.

Glory of Japa Yajna

Now Ramdas will tell you what should be the essence of our endeavour to realise this goal. Sadhanas or disciplines, Pujas and Tapascharyas are all done with the sole object of keeping our mind continuously in the remembrance of God. Now the most easy way to teach the mind to be in communion with God is to chant or repeat continuously His holy, glorious and all-powerful name. The repetition of God's name is an all-powerful Sadhana by itself. It includes every other Sadhana, because it brings us in contact with God. Some saints have declared that by repeating the holy name of God you are performing a Yajna at every step.

In the Bhagavad Gita it is said that of all the Yajnas the highest is Japa Yajna. Saints in different

parts of India, be it Western India, Southern India, Northern India or Eastern India, are all telling us to sing the name of God continuously, and by such singing and repetition to attain God-realisation. The repetition of God's name in order to commune with God is easy, because you can repeat it at all times, in all places, while for other Sadhanas you must have a particular place, a particular time, and other restrictions. By continuous repetition of God's name you can have a ceaseless, peaceful remembrance of Him, as Name and God are not different. It is said that he who has God's name always on his lips is a Jivanmukta, because by continuous repetition of the Name his ego-sense is dissolved and he becomes conscious of God within and later on feels complete identity with Him.

Before we are prompted from within to repeat the holy name of God, one thing is absolutely necessary, and that is the company of saints. Our devotion for God increases in the company of saints. Therefore two things are essential in life in order that we may progress in the spiritual path, and these are the society of saints and constant repetition of God's name. What joy was welling up in the hearts of you all when you were singing now the sweet name of God! God's name is very sweet and the sound of the Name is just nectar to the ear. When the mind is absorbed in the enthralling sound of God's name, it refuses to wander. Just as the bee, while drinking honey from the flower, gets absorbed in it, the mind gets absorbed in the sweet name of God.

Besides what Ramdas told you so far about the greatness of the Name, Ramdas will also finally tell you

that if you have faith in the Name and take the Name constantly, this Name is capable of taking you to the final spiritual experience, highest spiritual perfection, vision and realisation. The Name grants you not only the knowledge of the Atman, but also the vision of the universal Spirit manifest in the entire universe. You will realise, therefore, the all-inclusive, all-transcendent and complete Divine being in all His aspects. Therefore Ramdas' appeal to you all is to have on your lips the glorious name of God continuously, whatever the Name may be, whether Shiva, Rama, Krishna, or any other Name which you hold dear; and you will see what marvellous effect it produces in your heart, how it frees you from lust, greed and wrath, and grants you the knowledge of the real Self and gives you the experience of immortal bliss and peace.

AT THE VIVEKANANDA ASHRAM, KUALA LUMPUR, 28th November, 1954.

Grace of Mother Divine

For the sake of the mothers who have assembled here, Ramdas is going to say a few words. In the first place they must take him to be a child of theirs.

Ramdas is your child. He is going to speak to you about Divine grace. Divine grace comes to us through the Divine Mother. When the Mother is kind to us, She gives us the benefit of the Darshan of the Father. Ramdas will give you an instance from the Ramayana. We have read that when Rama, Sita and Lakshmana were going along a narrow path in the forest, one after the other in a line, Lakshmana could not have the Darshan of Rama for a very long time, as Sita was in the middle. Lakshmana prayed to the Mother to stand aside a little, so that he could have Darshan of Rama. She then stepped aside and allowed Lakshmana to have Darshan of Rama. So, by the grace of the Divine Mother, the veil of Maya that stands between us and the Supreme Lord can be removed. Therefore we must propitiate the Mother first before we can have the vision of God.

The Divine Mother is the mother of the entire universe. She is the very personification of divine Shakti. To surrender ourselves to the Divine Mother is to recognise that by Her will and power all things happen in the world. It is by Her power that we talk, walk and do everything. Every movement that takes

place in the universe, all actions and activities, are born of Her power. When we realise this truth, our ego-sense automatically disappears, the I-ness vanishes and we realise the Shiva aspect of the Divine, who is the all-pervading, static Brahman. Then we have a right to say 'Sivoham', 'Sivoham', 'Chidanandarupa Sivoham Sivoham'. This divine revelation comes to us through the grace of the Mother. Therefore, what we have to do is to become Her children and behold the whole universe as Her manifestation. In fact, everything that has name and form is Her name and form.

Sri Ramakrishna and the Mother

You know from the life of Sri Ramakrishna that he was an ardent and a very faithful and devoted son of the Divine Mother. He was able to see the Divine Mother everywhere, in all beings, creatures and things, in the latter part of his life. It is this grand vision of the Divine Mother everywhere that liberates us from the thraldom of the individual self and the cycle of birth and death. In this connection, Ramdas will give you an illustration of how we have to behold the whole universe as the manifestation of the Mother.

Saint Mira Bai

You have heard of Mira Bai, the famous saint of Mewar. One day she wished to have Darshan of a Mahatma, and went to the place where he lived. When she neared the hut, she was told by one of his disciples that the Mahatma was not prepared to see her as she was a woman and he was a Purusha (man). Then

Mira Bai sent word, "I have known of only one Purusha, and He is Krishna. All the rest in the world are women. Since I hear that there is another Purusha here, I would very much like to see him." As soon as the message was conveyed to the Mahatma, he came out and fell at the feet of Mira Bai asking her pardon. So, in fact, although outwardly we appear like men and women, virtually we are the expressions and manifestations of the Mother.

The Old Woman at Pandharpur

Ramdas will give you another instance. Many years ago when we went to Pandharpur, a place of pilgrimage in India, we had no idea where we could stay for the night. We reached the place late in the evening, and when we entered the city, we met a very old woman. She was holding a stick in her hand and was a bent figure. We went to her and asked where we could find a suitable place for rest that night. She replied, "Mother, I shall show you the way to a Dharmasala." We all followed her. As we were walking in the street, she went on talking about the glory of the Divine Mother. She was saying that the Mother has become the stars, the sun, moon, all men and women, and all things and objects everywhere in the world, and She is present everywhere and in everything. This was the universal vision of the Mother, which the old woman had. When we passed a temple in which there was the image of Rukmani, the old woman at once fell prostrate in the street before the image. Her vision was indeed wonderful. She was

seeing the Mother everywhere and was talking, behaving and doing everything like a child. So we have to become the children of the Divine Mother and, through Her grace, have the vision, Darshan and realisation of God.

AT THE VIVEKANANDA TAMIL SCHOOL, KUALA LUMPUR.

28th November, 1954.

Supremacy of the Spiritual Goal

Beloved Friends,—To Ramdas, you are the very embodiments of his eternal Beloved, the Lord of the universe. This vision was granted to him by the compassionate Lord several years ago, and from that time he sees his supreme Beloved in whatever direction he turns ; and on whomsoever his eyes fall, he beholds that person or object as the very manifestation of that supreme Reality. So Ramdas' present position, as he may explain to you, is that he is a simple, trusting, and dedicated child of God. As a humble servant of the Lord, as Ramdas' name suggests, he has been, from the time God accepted him, going all over India, conveying the message of the Divine name to all people who would assemble to hear his words. Ramdas has been telling all the friends he met at several places about the supremacy of the spiritual goal over every other goal in the world.

Bhakti leads to Jnana

If you deeply ponder over your problems of life, which you have to face every day, you will know that real happiness can be had only through communion, union, and oneness with God. From the experience which Ramdas gained through the grace of God, he found that the constant chanting of God's name is the

easiest way of approach to that supreme Spirit dwelling in the hearts of everyone of us. The first thing necessary for us is a keen aspiration to realise the Divine. This aspiration will enable us to remember God constantly. Because, where our love, our aspiration, or our ultimate wish is, there our mind is. So if we have a real desire to realise God, our mind will be filled with His remembrance. Remembrance of God itself gives us the taste of our union with Him and that taste is the sweetness of the immortal bliss and peace. Therefore it behoves us to have one-pointed devotion for God and constant remembrance of Him.

By constant thinking and remembrance of God through deep devotion, we shall have our minds thoroughly purged of all low desires belonging to our lower nature. So the repetition of God's name and the constant remembrance of God bring us purity of thought, word and deed. This experience will lead us to perfect stillness of the mind and in this stillness we become aware of the Divine presence within us and everywhere outside us. This means the realisation of the Supreme Self, the all-pervading Brahman, the all-pervading Reality. So Bhakti, in the earlier stage, leads us to Jnana. Jnana is the realisation of the Atman, who is the all-pervading, eternal, static, immortal Spirit. Jnana is not altogether the ultimate state of spiritual evolution.

Sama Darshan

There is a stage that comes to us after Jnana, and that is called Parabhakti. In Parabhakti we get the vision of God everywhere. We see the whole universe

as the manifestation of the divine Spirit which we have realised within ourselves. There is an expression in the Upanishads, सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म—— "Verily, the whole universe is Brahman." In the Bhagavad Gita also the same idea has been expressed in the words uttered by Lord Krishna, वासुदेवः सर्वमिति—— "Everything is Vasudeva." It is not that we have only to realise the static, all-pervading Brahman, but we have also to see the manifestation as the expression of Brahman. God is at once static and dynamic. He is formless and also with form. So, universal vision is the result of Jnana. In this universal vision all distinctions are lost. All human beings stand transformed before you as the very embodiments of God. In this state you rise above the Dwandwas and the three Gunas.

In the Bhagavad Gita this state has been described as 'Sama Darshan'. In this state you will not have the least trace of egoism in you. You will feel you are one with all existence, with all beings and with all creatures in the universe. You belong now not to any society, to any country, religion, caste, creed, or colour. You become the lover of the entire humanity. The whole humanity is nothing but a manifestation of God for you. Having told you what we have to attain in this life, Ramdas is now going to explain to you the purpose for which God made him start on this world tour.

Ramdas' Mission

About three and a half months ago, God gave him the command to leave India on this world tour. The object was to propagate the ideal of universal love and

service. As it is, we find the world rent with strife. There is much distraction and discord and there are chances of an impending war. You find acute differences among people belonging to different religions. We have forgotten that as human beings we are the children of one God, who is the God of all nations, all creeds, and all religions. If we recognise this, there will not be any room for dissension and war in the world. Therefore it behoves us to go deep down within ourselves and find the true basis of world harmony and peace. That basis is the universal Spirit whom we call God. Therefore we should devote every day some time exclusively to meditate, to remember and pray to this divine Spirit within us, so that by His grace our life may become free from lust, greed and wrath and thereby we can produce an atmosphere of goodwill in the world.

Let us first Elevate Ourselves

By attaining the universal vision, which Ramdas has a little while ago described, we are not merely doing good to others, but we are elevating ourselves to a state of immortal bliss and peace which we are in search of. It is by having such a vision that we gain for ourselves real peace and happiness, and we also impart that joy and peace to others with whom we come daily in contact. We shall thus be contributing our share to the achievement of universal peace, goodwill and harmony. God is not different from us. We are ever one with Him. But since we have forgotten Him, we feel a sense of separation from Him. So our task here is to abolish or to eliminate that sense of

separation between us and God, and live a life by which we can become His instruments for doing good in the world, for the welfare of the world, for the uplift of the world, as willed by Him.

God is not to be attained but only to be realised. In the Upanishads there is a Mahavakya, अहं ब्रह्मास्मि——"I am Brahman". This shows that we are verily He. We have forgotten Him. Some veil has come before us which makes us oblivious of Him, and so we do not know that we are one with Him. In Christianity you will find that Jesus Christ has categorically said that the kingdom of heaven is within us, and that in that kingdom God resides. Ramdas is reminded also of another expression in the Bible: "Be still and know I am God." This means that we must keep our mind still and realise that we and God are one. We are having this experience everyday when we are singing God's name in chorus or alone. We find then that the mind which was running here and there gets still, as it is bathed in a strange, and so far unexperienced peace and bliss. In that state we are filled with divine bliss and peace, and we find no distinction between us and our fellow beings, between us and the Divine to whom we are devoted and whose name we are chanting.

Ramdas' visit to the various countries of the world was with the mission of bringing into the hearts of people whom he met, the desire to attain that perfect peace within and without. If you are free, through constant meditation and remembrance of God, from desires belonging to your lower nature, you will be able to practise universal love and service. There is

high tension now in the whole world. In several parts of the world, ws see people seized with an unseen fear of some great catastrophe befalling them. In this condition it behoves everyone of us to tune our mind with the Almighty God and by His grace see that no such catastrophe befalls humanity.

Test of True Devotion

All distinctions among us must be dissolved. because we are all children of one God. This we should never forget when we deal with each other. Unity means strength. Strength must be achieved not for harming one another, but for helping each other and to bring about peace and harmony among all people in the world. If we are true devotees of God, we must love all beings, because God dwells in all beings. The Lord says that devotee is dear to Him who loves Him in all beings and creatures. When a man says he loves God and does not love his fellow beings, he is a liar.

The test of our love for God is that we should love our fellow-beings, be kind to them, forgiving towards them, tolerant towards them. Our heart must go out in love towards those who are in distress, suffering and trouble. Here we should not make any distinction. There are some people who give help only to the people of the community, caste, or country to which they belong. But love must flow out towards everybody alike. Because our Atman, the Supreme Spirit, is the same in all beings of the world. If we narrow our vision and love only certain communities or certain classes of people, then we are not really loving in

spirit but only through mental or physical affinity. This is the great message which we have received from our spiritual masters, teachers and Avatars of the world.

Unless our vision is universalised, unless our life mingles with the life divine, we cannot be free from the ego-sense, we cannot attain that liberation, Moksha or Nirvana which we hunger for. God-realisation not merely frees us from rebirth or transmigration, but also grants us, here and now, the enjoyment of eternal bliss and peace. When we are enjoying this bliss, we will find that the pleasures of the senses are absolutely nothing. A person in pursuit of these pleasures will then be like one craving for gutter water when he has been drinking divine nectar itself. Ramdas speaks to you from his own experience, which God in His grace has granted him. He has been experiencing this divine bliss for about 30 years now, without any break. For the last 20 years or so, Ramdas has not been doing any Sadhana, because Sadhana has ceased. The person who was doing this Sadhana is no more. He cannot or could not have sat before you to speak about God or universal vision, or Brahman, unless God had given him the authority to do so.

Ramdas' Advice

The joy that you get by realising the Divine within you, by realising your identity and oneness with God, is so unsurpassed that when he sees people rushing after pleasures of the senses, he wonders how such people could be pursuing the shadows, leaving the

substance behind. Everyone of you is the very embodiment of Divinity. Your true being is *Sat-chit-ananda* —absolute Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. You have forgotten this truth. Therefore, remember it by taking the holy, powerful name of the Reality, until your mind disappears and you stand revealed as the Truth itself and enjoy, as Ramdas has been enjoying, that infinite bliss which is inexhaustible. It is eternal, beyond time, space and causation. That Reality is yourself.

May you all enjoy that bliss and peace by taking your mind inward and by losing it in that infinite ocean of bliss and peace ! The bliss which Ramdas is enjoying now is due to the power of God's sweet and holy name. By repeating constantly the holy Name our mind becomes still and the latent joy within us fills us through and through and those who are coming near us are elevated. They also get that joy. When we are filled with this bliss, we cannot but love all alike. We cannot but see the Divine everywhere. The whole universe will be for us, then, the veritable image of our eternal Beloved, whom we have found within ourselves.

AT THE SUDDHA SAMAJ, KUALA LUMPUR.
29th November, 1954.

One Goal for all Religions

Dear Friends, — We are extremely delighted to find ourselves in this Ashram which radiates love and peace. We find that here is a common platform for the meeting of devotees of all the religions of the world. This is a happy sight and we observe that this meeting is held in a spirit of brotherhood based upon the acceptance of one God as the God of all religions. Although the great spiritual Masters who came to redeem mankind from sin and error have chalked out particular paths for reaching God, it is understood that ultimately we have to reach the same God who is the God of all people in the world. We have four principal religions in the world. They are Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. Christianity is founded, rather established, around the great personality of Jesus Christ. Islam is the basis or foundation of the teachings of the great prophet, Mohammed. Buddhism is based upon the teachings of Buddha. In Hinduism there are many great spiritual teachers who have been guiding the people towards the realisation of God. Then again we have Guru Nanak, the great saint of the Punjab, who has founded Sikhism. All of them guide their followers to the same goal. If we remember this, we shall live together in perfect amity, friendliness and harmony. That we can live in perfect harmony is evident now at this place, and Ramdas is supremely happy to see this.

'Religion' means 'binding back to God. We have strayed away from Him and we have to go back to Him. We are all children of one father and mother, who is God. The war clouds are there because we do not see among ourselves the unity based on our spiritual kinship.

Pray for Unity and Peace

In our tour round the world, we have been observing how people are obsessed everywhere by the feeling that there is going to be another war. But in several places we visited, we found, whatever the religion they belonged to, they crowded together in their spiritual centres to pray to God to avert another war. The united efforts of us all should be utilised to pray to God with one voice. We shall then be releasing a force which will produce peace and harmony. God's grace is necessary for us particularly at this time. It is therefore important that, whatever the country or race to which we may belong. we must unite ourselves, love one another, and produce an atmosphere of goodwill and peace in the world based upon the oneness of the Divine Spirit that pervades everywhere and controls all things. Let us pray that God, in all His mercy and compassion, may create in our hearts love for Him, faith in Him and absolute devotion for Him. We can thus get rid of our impurities and our animal nature and raise ourselves to the divine nature, so that we can see God, feel His presence everywhere and live and act in the experience of that realisation. Only by doing so we can bring real peace in the world.

The most important thing is that we should love each other. Christ says, ''Love thy neighbour as thyself.'' Mohammed says, ''We should create a brotherhood among ourselves.'' Krishna says, ''We should behold the Divine everywhere and love all beings as our own self.'' Buddha says, ''Give love for hate.'' Guru Nanak says, ''Keep the name of God constantly, so that your mind will be pure and you can love all beings alike.'' That is the message of all great teachers of the world. They all want us to love one another and live in harmony. This is the time when we need many more centres of this type, so that our hearts may go to the one omnipotent Being whose grace alone can bring peace and goodwill in the world, and dispel the clouds of darkness hanging over us.

AT THE MAHAMARIAMMAN TEMPLE, KUALA LUMPUR.

29th November, 1954.

Surrender to Divine Mother

Beloved Embodiments of Divinity, — We have gathered here tonight in the temple of the Divine Mother, under Her benign protection and grace. Let us, from this moment onwards, feel that we are all children of the Divine Mother, and thus sink all our differences and love one another in the light of this knowledge. It is by loving one another that we can achieve the Divine vision—see the Mother in the entire universe. As it is, we are caught up in the toils of Apara Prakriti (lower nature), as a result of which we are obsessed by differences and suffer in many ways. Therefore, it is necessary that we should rise above our lower nature by surrendering ourselves to the Para Prakriti (higher nature), the Divine Mother. The Divine Mother is the all-pervading, eternal, dynamic principle —Para Shakti. By the grace of this Divine Mother the soul is liberated from ignorance and gets the vision of Shiva or Brahman. In fact Shiva and Shakti are not different, just as the sun and his light. It is rightly said Shiva and Shakti are the two aspects of the same ultimate Godhead, who is called Paramashiva. If we really wish to free ourselves from the bondage of ignorance, from the obsession of the ego-sense, there is no other way for us than to surrender ourselves completely to the Divine Mother and rise above the lower nature

into our higher nature, and live always in a state of perfect union with the Mother and with Shiva who is the substratum of the *lila* played by the Mother as the universe.

Guru alone Liberates

Ramdas, who is sitting before you, is a child of the Divine Mother. He is blessed with the vision of the Divine everywhere, through the grace of great saints. Ramdas' object in talking to you is to tell you what Divine grace is and how such grace can come to us and liberate us from ignorance. Men struggle hard to purify their mind and turn it towards God. But they are unable to do so in spite of their strenuous efforts. What they have to do, in the first place, is to aspire for God. If they really wish to see God, they must contact a saint, a realised soul. God—the universal Spirit, the universal Power and the universal Principle—does not shower on us His grace directly. He does so through saints. Saints are the very embodiments of the Divine Shakti. So it has been accepted on all hands, that Guru is the manifestation of God. Even Rama, Krishna and other great Avatars had their own Gurus. It is the Guru alone who can grant us Moksha or liberation. If we appeal to God, He appears to us in the form of a Guru in order to grant us Divine grace and the highest vision and experience. How the Guru liberates, purifies, and grants the highest beatitude to the worst of men is something wonderful. Ramdas will give you three instances.

Story of Valmiki

You all know the great sage, Valmiki. He was a robber who was attacking passers-by, killing and looting them for the maintenance of his family. In this way he was committing crime after crime for a long time. What was it that turned his mind entirely towards God and ultimately enabled him to realise God and become a Rishi? It was the grace of a saint. Devarishi Narada was once passing through the same way, where many people had been attacked by this robber before. The robber approached him and was about to attack him with the object of robbing him of his musical instrument. Then Narada questioned him what his purpose was in committing such crimes. Valmiki replied that he was doing all that for the maintenance of his family. In the world many people are giving the same excuse for leading a dishonest life. The advice, which Narada at that time gave to Valmiki, applies to everyone who leads a dishonest life. Narada told Valmiki that he would have to suffer for all the crimes he committed. Valmiki protested that he was not committing any crime, as he was acting solely for the support of his family, and that, if at all it was a sin, a share of it would also go to the members of his family, who were benefited by his robbery. Then Narada asked him to go to his wife and children and ask if they were prepared to share his sin. The robber went and questioned his wife and children. All of them replied that they were not prepared to share his sin and that he alone had to suffer for it. They also told him that they were only to enjoy what wealth he

brought for them. As soon as Valmiki heard this his eyes were opened, and without losing any time, he rushed back to Narada and prayed to him to save him from this predicament. Then Narada gave him the Rama Mantra and asked him to repeat it constantly. He could not repeat the Mantra properly. Instead of saying 'Rama', 'Rama', he could only say 'Mara', 'Mara.' However even by repeating 'Mara', 'Mara', which automatically became 'Rama', 'Rama', the Ramnam came to his lips and it went on ceaselessly. It transformed his whole life. He beheld Rama within his heart and everywhere about him, and became a great sage. That was all by the grace of Narada. This is only one instance.

Nityananda and Two Ruffians

You must have heard of the life of Lord Gouranga, the famous saint of Bengal. During his time there were two ruffians. It was the custom of Lord Gouranga to sing the name of God in ecstasy and walk in the streets followed by his disciples. The two ruffians, who had no love for saints and had no faith in God, were in all manner of ways harassing Gouranga and his followers, when they were passing through the streets in procession. On one occasion, one of them flung a sharp stone which hit Gouranga's disciple, Nityananda. It hit him on his forehead and blood gushed out. Nityananda knew from whom the stone came, and he rushed straight towards him and gave him a warm embrace with all love and affection, and also told him with folded hands, "Oh my brother, I am not angry

that you have hit me with a stone, but I appeal to you to take the name of Govinda at least once." These two ruffians were stunned to see the humility, love and affection of the saint, and they at once fell at his feet begging for pardon. From that time they gave up their evil ways and joined the Bhajan party and began to sing God's name and dance in the company of the devotees. Later on they became famous as great devotees of Lord Krishna.

The Story of St. Paul

Ramdas will give yet another instance to show how, by the grace of a saint, a person who was given to bad ways was saved and became a great devotee of God. This happened during the time of Jesus Christ. You must have heard of the life of St. Paul. Jesus Christ was going from place to place preaching about the glory of God and the greatness of praying to Him and realising Him. To listen to his preachings thousands of people assembled Wherever he went, this St. Paul, whose name at that time was Saul, also used to go with his rowdy friends to create disturbance and hinder the good work. On one occasion, when he heard that Jesus was delivering a discourse at some place three miles away from where Saul was staying, he took some rowdies and proceeded in that direction. On his way, he suddenly heard a voice, "Saul, why dost thou persecuteth Me?" Saul knew that it was the voice of Jesus. Suddenly a flash struck his eyes and he fell down unconscious. When he got up from that place, lifted up by his friends, he found he had gone blind. For

nearly three or four hours he was stark blind. But what happened when he was undergoing this experience? His heart was completely changed. He became a great devotee and a disciple of Jesus. As soon as he dedicated his life to his spiritual master, his sight was restored. Soon he left his home and country and went into solitude for three years, which he spent in prayers and meditation. He returned from there a completely changed man, filled with divine peace and radiance. Thereafter he was known as St. Paul.

Ramdas' Transformation

Ramdas has given you these three instances, but these are not the only three. There are many more. All saints and sages are telling us with one voice that they got illumination only after they first got a distinct turn of mind towards God by the contact of saints. When Ramdas was in Singapore two days ago and was asked to speak in the Ramakrishna Mission, a mother from the audience asked him how Ramdas' life was suddenly changed 33 years ago. Was it due to his previous Karma or effort ? Ramdas gave her a simple reply that the change came to him only through Divine Grace.

Grace is the only thing which can turn our mind from the world towards God. This Grace came to Ramdas through saints. A man may read many spiritual books and may become a scholar, but he cannot achieve Grace which is necessary for his inner transformation and ultimate realisation of God, unless he comes in contact with an illumined personality filled with divine

radiance and peace. Such a contact alone can kindle a soul from within and awaken him to the consciousness of God and from that time make him live for God alone.

How to find a Guru

Q: How to find a Guru ?

Ramdas : That is a very important question. When a man is eagerly aspiring to have a Guru, the Guru will either come to him or he will be taken to the Guru by the Divine within himself. It is that way that Ramdas was led by God for the Darshan of Ramana Maharshi who was in Tiruvannamalai, though Ramdas was in Mangalore which is far away from Tiruvannamalai.

Q: Why is divine grace available only to a few ?

Ramdas: All people do not want it.

Q: In this world where there is so much of deceit, how can we get a Guru ?

Ramdas: We need not mind the world. Let us mind ourselves. If we sincerely wish to have a Guru, we shall get his contact and be saved.

Q: What is the sign of those who are progressing on the spiritual path ?

Ramdas : They will learn to love everybody, they will have a soft heart, they will feel for those in distress and try their best to relieve such suffering. Fellow-feeling, love for all, compassion, tolerance and forbearance are some of the qualities which a devotee develops if he is really on the path of God.

Ramdas' Appeal for Unity

Ramdas will close this speech with a few words. If we have real faith in God and if we are real devotees of God, we must resolve all our differences among ourselves and stand united together. There are differences we find among religions. One religion says that that alone is true and all the other religions are false. So they differ. Again there are differences in the same religion. Take, for instance, Hinduism. There are many sects and all of them are fighting among themselves. Even the devotees who worship the same God, say Shiva, are fighting with each other. If they are Vaishnavaites, they are also fighting among themselves. They say, ''This is my temple, this is my Ashram'' and so on. All these fights are in the name of God. There is only one God who is the father and mother of us all and we are His children. Therefore, we must all unite together in His name. Instead of that, it is indeed strange that we should be fighting with one another. So, Ramdas' prayer to you all is that you should sink all your differences, love each other, live harmoniously with each other, go to each others' temples and Ashrams, attain universal love, and thereby feel God's presence within and everywhere about you, and finally attain the ultimate goal of our life, which is absolute peace and bliss.

AT THE SRI DANDAYUDHAPANI TEMPLE,
KUALA LUMPUR.
29th November, 1954.

Moksha is Here and Now

Beloved Manifestations of God,—Ramdas does not know to address you in any other way than this. Ramdas is hesitating to give you an *upadesh;* because when he looks upon you all as the manifestations of God, he does not know what *upadesh* he can give you. He can only tell you that he got this vision by repeating God's name constantly. This is the easiest way to keep our mind ever in tune with God. The Name can remain on our lips always, only when we have Bhakti or one-pointed devotion to God. Bhakti will come to us when we pray to Him with all our heart. After we have got Bhakti, it is possible for us to remember Him constantly by taking His name. It is not merely that we must be devoted to Him by taking His name, but we must also purify our actions. When you take a medicine as prescribed by the doctor, you have to observe certain diet restrictions also. Unless you observe the diet restrictions, the medicine will have no effect. In the same way, in our daily activities, we must see that we do no wrong to anybody. Whenever we sit for meditation or for Puja, we find that our mind is fickle and wanders here and there. In order to keep our mind in tune with God, one thing is necessary, that is, we must be pure in thought, word and deed. It is therefore enjoined upon us by great souls that the first thing we

have to do is to purify ourselves, before we can see God and attain the state of perfect liberation.

It is said that *Chitta shuddhi* — purity of mind— is the one thing required for attaining Jnana. Then alone God's grace will come to us and we shall be blessed with perfect liberation or freedom from the cycle of births and deaths. Moksha is not a thing that will come to us only after death, but Moksha is here and now. The moment we realise we are one with God, we shall be filled with divine bliss and peace.

Pray to God to become Yours

The object of human life is to attain this blessed state and for that purpose we must pray to Him with all devotion. But instead, we pray to Him for so many perishable things. If we ask for the things of the world, we shall never become happy. As regards the worldly things, we must be satisfied with whatever God gives us and our heart must be ever pining for Him for His own sake. God gives everything that we desire, but such things do not contribute to our happiness. If you ask God to become yours entirely, He is prepared to become yours. But you do not want Him. You want only the things that He gives you. This is the ignorance which has kept man in bondage. Therefore, as we have been told, if we ask God to come to us, He definitely comes and becomes ours, and along with Him all His greatness, glory and prosperity will follow. God is eternal, whereas the things we ask for from Him are non-eternal. Non-eternal things can never give us eternal happiness. This is the experience of everyone

of us. Therefore let us open our heart to Him, ask Him and pray to Him for immortality and bliss. So our prayer should be only, "Lead me from the unreal to the real, lead me from darkness to light, and lead me from death to immortality."

AT THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, PENANG, 30th November, 1954.

God-Vision

Beloved Friends,—You are verily, for Ramdas, the manifestations of his Eternal Beloved, Ram Himself. Today the subject on which he has been asked to speak to you is God-vision. God-vision means seeing God. To see God is not to see Him in any particular form but to see Him in all and as all. The entire universe and all beings and creatures in it are really the expressions or manifestations of the Divine. In order to get this universal vision and enjoy bliss and peace eternal, it is absolutely necessary that we should know in what relation we stand with the universe and what are the conditions to be fulfilled before we can be blessed with this supreme vision.

The Course of Discipline

What we have to do, in the first place, is to realise that we are the all-pervading, static, silent, nameless and formless Reality, whom we call Purusha or Atman. Atman is the static, motionless, all-pervading aspect of God. To realise this aspect of the Divine we have to go through certain kinds of discipline. Without discipline we shall not be able to subjugate the mind and the desires that are lurking in it and which cause restlessness in us. Because of these desires and of the ego-sense, we are shut off from this vision, and we do things contrary to the attainment of this supreme goal. So, in the first place, we must create a relationship

between us and the Divine Being who is our father, mother and master. Let us look upon Him as master and ourselves as servants and thereby humble ourselves before Him, thinking of His greatness.

When we think of Him as the all-pervading, eternal omnipresent and omniscient being, we feel very small. But we are apt to forget Him, and as soon as we forget Him, the ego asserts itself and we begin to think we are something powerful, something great. When we are obsessed by the ego, we are liable to suffer. We have to keep our mind ever engaged in meditation, in remembrance of and in attunement with God. Without these practices it is not possible to subjugate the mind and free it from the desires and its wandering nature. By thinking of God constantly, the mind gets purified and is enabled to concentrate on God, to perceive the Divine within us, the all-pervading substratum or basis of this universal manifestation, and finally to have the vision of God everywhere. If you seriously take up this problem of concentrating and purifying your mind, the repetition of God's name will prove to be a panacea for all the ills of the mind, for all the ills of life.

How the Name Works

So God's name is a simple way to purify our mind and realise the Atman. The Name is a guide to us and proves to be a Guru. The Name is given to us by the Guru, and the Guru establishes himself in our heart in the form of the Name. The Name is full of light and glory. When it is in our mind, the mind is filled with light, power, bliss and peace, because the Name is a

nectarine pill. When you have a peppermint on your tongue, it does not take time for you to taste the sweetness of it. So when you put the pill of God's name on your tongue, the sweetness of it starts at once and you immediately get the joy and peace born of the revelation of the Divine within you. You become at once conscious that you are not the body but the Spirit. The consciousness comes to you by the repetition of the Name.

Ramdas tells you this from his own experience. He has not done any Sadhana other than repetition of God's name. By such practice he forgot everything about the world and was completely absorbed in the remembrance of God without break. All this happened by God's grace. Ramdas cannot say that it was by his own will that he did it, but God came to him in the form of the Guru and made him repeat the Name constantly. When we are trying to repeat God's name, we find very often that the Name is not sweet. Whenever Ramdas tells people about the sweetness of the Name, they say that it is not sweet for them and they do not feel or experience the sweetness which Ramdas speaks of. But Ramdas tells them why they do not get the sweetness. It is because they do not take the Name in the spirit in which it ought to be taken. They must surrender themselves to the Divine, humble themselves to the dust, and then take the Name. Then only they can taste the sweetness.

Do not have the pride that you are taking the Name by your will. It is the Divine that makes you take the Name. God's vision can come to us only when our mind

is perfectly pure, that is, when it has the purity born of complete absence of desires and ambitions for worldly things. Everything has to be wiped out because the mind ceases to exist in that state. The joy that Ramdas has been experiencing for the past thirty years or more is simply indescribable. He goes about everywhere telling people that this blessed human life is intended only for getting this joy and not for pursuing the pleasures of the world. These pleasures are nothing compared to the ineffable joy you can get by realising the Self and seeing the whole universe as the manifestation of the Self. When you have this vision, you are full to the brim with joy and what more can you have in the world? You may, of course, feel sorry that people do not understand this and do not derive benefit of this human life granted to them by God as a rare gift for achieving this goal. The soul's craving is for immortal bliss and peace; the ephemeral joys do not satisfy it, as they are always accompanied by cares and worries. When this self-existent, eternal and infinite bliss can be achieved in this human life by everyone of us, and everyone of us has the right to attain this beatific state, why should we run after the pleasures of the senses?

The Glory of Brahmananda

When you experience that joy in your heart, your love flows out to all beings in the world; there will be no trace of I-ness left in you, and you will become the embodiment of bliss. All your low desires will be wiped out, all sense of distinction gone, diversity resolved into unity, and multiplicity dissolved into the

oneness of all existence, seen and unseen, manifest and unmanifest, and there will be nothing but joy and joy for you. This is what they call *Brahmananda*, the supreme bliss that has been talked of so much in the Hindu scriptures and other religions. They speak of Moksha, Nirvana, liberation and so on. All these are nothing but this supreme beatific state on attaining which you are liberated from the bondage of Karma and in which there is no beginning or end. It is infinite, eternal, beyond time, space and causation. All ideas of time, space and causation, birth and death belong to the relative plane and are therefore entirely false. There is no reality about them. They are all created by man. In that supreme Reality these things do not exist. Time has no value there. We take time as existing whereas it does not really exist. If we look at it from our narrow angle of vision we see everything distorted. But if we purify our vision and see things as they are, everything is Divine for us. Everything is Brahman and there is nothing but He everywhere.

We are obsessed by a wrong vision, born of ignorance which makes us unaware of that state, and therefore we have fallen into the clutches of the lower nature. We are behaving like animals and other creatures which are deliberately courting fears and anxieties. Unfortunately we are not making the right use of our life. We cannot be sure we shall get this human life again. Therefore we must make the best use of this life as taught by our ancestors. If we want to realise that supreme state, we have to conquer our

lower nature and stand revealed as the embodiment of the Divine. This is the purpose for which human life is given to us.

The test of our devotion to God is our love for all human beings alike. It is said that a man who professes to love God but does not love his fellow-beings is a liar. A lover of humanity is really a lover of God. Ramdas would finally appeal to you to have God's name on your tongue and find out its taste for yourselves. The taste of the pudding lies in the eating. Ramdas may go on telling about the glory of the Name for days together, but until you take it for yourselves you cannot taste its sweetness. It can lift you to the highest spiritual status.

Q: Is it necessary to renounce the world to have the final state of realisation?

Renunciation of Attachment

Ramdas: You have to renounce attachment for the world but not the world. Nobody can renounce the world. Even if a man goes to the forest, the world is with him. Once a man, who could not find God anywhere in the world, went to the forest to realise God there. He spent many years in the forest undergoing strict discipline and severe austerities. Finally God gave him His vision in the form of the world. Then this man realised that God was in the world and there was no need for him to have gone to the forest. He went back to the world and lived there happily seeing the whole world as God.

God Himself in Guru's Form

Q: Is it true the Guru comes to the aspirant automatically?

Ramdas: How do you realise God? You crave for Him and long for somebody to lead you from darkness to light, so that you may remember God and realise Him. With this keen aspiration you pray to God for guidance. When this cry comes from the innermost core of your heart, the Guru comes to you or you happen to go to the Guru. There must be hunger in your heart for somebody to guide you. God Himself comes in the form of the Guru to liberate you. It is even said that God cannot grant Moksha but only the Guru can do so. To give Moksha is the right of the Guru. God can give you material wealth and prosperity but not liberation.

AT THE ROTARY CLUB, PENANG.

1st December, 1954.

World Peace

Beloved Friends,—Ramdas is very happy to accept your kind invitation to address you a few words on world peace. This is not the first occasion Ramdas has been addressing the members of the Rotary Club. When he visited America, his friends in St. Paul arranged to take him to the Rotary Club where he was asked to speak. He had heard a lot about the Rotary Club which is an international organisation, the membership of which is drawn from all parts of the world. This institution therefore stands for universal brotherhood. Unless we meet together on a common platform, as it were, feel friendly towards each other, love each other, and serve each other in a spirit of brotherhood, we cannot expect world peace.

Basis for Peace

World peace is based upon the unification of all members of the human race without distinction of creed, nationality, or race. As such, it is in the fitness of things that we, who have assembled here, should feel one with each other in every respect, as belonging to one human family, to one world family. The closer we come together on this basis the better it is for the world condition. The sure way in which this can be brought about is to know that our inner basis is God, who is our father and mother. If we look upon Him as such, then in the light of our spiritual kinship we can

always live in peace. When we do so, we create an atmosphere of harmony and goodwill in the world, which will help in removing all discord and strife and in scattering the war clouds hanging over us. This is what Ramdas felt when he visited the various countries of the world.

United Prayer for Peace

Ramdas is happy to be in your midst, because you are all aiming at world peace. This institution has earned world fame as it stands for internationalism and therefore it behoves us that we should live together in an atmosphere of friendliness and pray to the Divine so that by His grace our efforts to bring about peace in the world may be successful. This is the need of the hour. Peace can come to us only through the union of all the people in the world and this is possible only when we recognise the supreme Spirit—God. When we are in tune with God through meditation and prayer, we are drawn towards each other. This affinity is based on the knowledge of the all-pervading Spirit. Matter is only on the surface, but in the Spirit deep down within us we are all one. In the Spirit there is no difference, because it is the only Reality. You may call it by any name you like and you may approach it through any method you like, and be guided by any teacher, be it Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed, Krishna or any other great soul that came to the world to guide us towards God. So many attempts are being made by all the nations and their leaders to ensure world peace and bring about better understanding among the people. But these have proved unsuccessful. The only way is to appeal

to the Divine within us, the Divine which pervades everywhere, so that by His power we can have better understanding of the goal we should reach. The last two wars have caused a lot of devastation in the world. We can prevent wars only by God's grace. Therefore, Ramdas' appeal to you all who are assembled here is: "Let us unite together in the Spirit and offer our prayers to the Almighty Lord of the universe so that by His blessings, by His grace and by His power, love, goodwill, peace and harmony may prevail on earth and all may live together in peace, prosperity and mutual service."

AT THE SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAM AND ORPHANAGE, PENANG.

1st December, 1954.

Sri Ramakrishna's Experiences

Beloved Manifestations of Divinity,—You are all, for Ramdas, the very forms of his Eternal Beloved. We have gathered here under the holy influence of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, and it is therefore in the fitness of things that Ramdas should speak a few words about this great Mahatma. All of you know that the aim of human life is to achieve eternal happiness. Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, by his life, has clearly shown us how we can achieve this supreme goal. When he started his life at Dakshineswar, he was a great devotee of the Divine Mother and therefore he was on the path of God-realisation through devotion. His mind was so absorbed in the remembrance of the Divine Mother, that he lost all consciousness of the outer world. By this utmost devotion to the Mother and his entire dedication to her, he was able to get her Darshan. It was not merely the personal Darshan of the Divine Mother that he had, but by the grace of the Guru who happened to go to him, he was able to attain also the knowledge of his oneness in the Self with the Divine Mother. This knowledge of the Atman or his realisation of oneness with the supreme Spirit enabled him to behold the Divine Mother in the whole universe, as all beings, creatures and things. In this supreme state he enjoyed peace and bliss which were simply

indescribable. So Ramakrishna Paramahamsa's life is a beacon to us all, as it shows us the way to realise the supreme goal of life and enjoy eternal happiness.

Six Forms of Devotion

The path he has pointed out to us all is the path of devotion. It is through Bhakti alone that we can have the Darshan of God. There are six forms of Bhakti, as described by a great saint of Bengal. These six forms of Bhakti show the nature of our relationship with God. They are *Shanta Bhakti, Dasya Bhakti, Sakhya Bhakti, Vatsalya Bhakti, Prema Bhakti and Sakhi Bhakti.* As examples, we have Ambarisha for *Shanta Bhakti,* Hanuman for *Dasya Bhakti,* Arjuna for *Sakhya Bhakti,* Yasoda for *Vatsalya Bhakti,* Radha for *Prema Bhakti* and Gopis for *Sakhi Bhakti.* What we have to do is to have a relationship with God in any way, as described in the six forms now mentioned, and then offer our heart, our mind, and our entire being to the Divine, surrendering ourselves to Him in all respects. You know, Ramakrishna looked upon God as Mother, and himself as the son of the Mother.

Bhakti is of two kinds—*Sakama* and *Nishkama*. The devotee who practises *Sakama Bhakti* asks God to give him worldly things, such as wealth, name, fame, and also enjoyments of the senses. *Nishkama Bhakti* expects from God nothing but His Darshan or the realisation of the devotee's oneness with God. Nishkama Bhakti alone will enable us to attain that supreme happiness, which the soul hungers for. *Nishkama Bhakti* releases us from the bondage of Karma and gives

us the ultimate state of perfect liberation or Moksha. Therefore, whenever we go to the temple, whenever we sit up for any practice of meditation. Bhajan or Japa, we must have in our mind only one thought and that thought or desire should be to have the Darshan or vision of God and nothing else. This does not mean that we should give up the life in the world, but our aim must be to reach God and we must do all actions with a view to achieve this goal. We cannot realise God, we cannot see Him, we cannot attain Jnana, unless our mind is perfectly pure. Therefore we must constantly think of God, remember Him and do all actions in His name and for His sake in order to purify our heart from all low desires.

How to dispel Fear of War

When we have achieved purity of mind, we become conscious of the Divine presence within us and everywhere about us. In this state, when we pray to God to bring peace and goodwill on earth, God will respond to and fulfil our prayer. The peace that we crave for in this world, in its present state of distraction, discord and strife, can be got only if we go within ourselves and find the Source of our being—God. In the light of this experience, we can disseminate peace and produce a peace atmosphere so that the world may be free from discord and strife. In our travels in different parts of the world, we have noticed the fear of war prevalent everywhere. The atmosphere is almost surcharged with a feeling of insecurity and a dread of a great catastrophe. This fear is there because

we have lost faith in God. If we believe in God, who is ruling over us and protecting us, and if we pray to Him with all our heart, His power will descend on the world and dispel the clouds of war that are hanging over us.

Keen Hunger for Peace

Another thing that Ramdas noticed when he travelled in the Western and Eastern countries is that there is a keen hunger in the hearts of all beings for peace in the world. All the believers in God, to whatever denomination or creed they might belong, are whole-heartedly praying to God to bring peace and goodwill in the world. In the Christian churches, Protestant or Catholic, you will find people crowding in overflowing numbers during the time of prayer. Ramdas has also noticed that innumerable new spiritual and religious associations have been started all over Europe, America and Japan, in order that people can gather in the name of the Supreme Spirit and pray to Him to prevent the outbreak of another war in the world. Before Ramdas went outside India on this world tour, he was going round India and there he found millions of people taking God's name and holding prayer meetings. Everywhere there is an awakening, in the hearts of humanity, towards God. The present condition, which God has brought about in the world, seems to be favourable for turning our mind towards God, because it is in times of difficulty and trouble that we remember God. Therefore, the present condition is perhaps necessary according to God's will,

to increase our devotion to God and lead us to union with Him.

Glory of Divine Name

Before closing this speech, Ramdas would like to tell you something about the power, greatness and glory of the Divine name. God's name is not different from God. The moment you place the Name on your tongue, you begin to feel your union with Him and the real joy and peace which you are aspiring for. There is no easier way to think of God, to remember Him, and to feel the consciousness of His presence with us than the chanting of His holy name. For instance, when thousands of us gather together and sing the name of God, we can find for ourselves how it raises pure and holy emotions in our hearts and gives us the experience of joy, peace and ecstasy. The singing of God's name dissolves all our differences, and we feel that we are one in Spirit with all, and that we are all children of one God. The differences to which we cling on the basis of religion, creed, caste, colour and nationality are entirely false. When we know that we are the children of one Divine Parent, there is no scope for us to think in terms of division or separateness.

Our Shastras clearly tell us that everything is Brahman. The distinctions that we see, the divisions that we observe, are utterly false. They are born of our ignorance. It is not only that we must try to stop war and dissensions between countries and amongst ourselves, but also we must create unity based upon the knowledge of the one indwelling Spirit, whom we call

Brahman, Trutn, or the ultimate Reality. This sense of separation and this consciousness of diversity will go when love floods our heart and flows out to humanity. This universal love, which we should cultivate, is possible only when we have the universal vision or the vision of Divinity everywhere. This supreme state of internal purity. universal love and universal vision, can come to us only when our mind is perfectly concentrated, purified and freed from the low desires which are lurking within, and when ultimately the ego-sense is eliminated.

The Easiest Way

The easiest way, as Ramdas has already told you, is the ceaseless or continuous remembrance of God. We do Puja, sit up for meditation for a while, and do other spiritual practices in order to keep our mind pure. By such practices it may be possible for sometime to keep the mind still. But as we come out and engage ourselves in active life, when we have to do our daily duties, the mind goes out of control and becomes restless and agitated. To keep our mind ever in a state of serenity, calmness and equanimity, the only way is to have the name of God as much as possible on our tongue. By continuous repetition of God's name, a state of Divine consciousness develops within us, and we feel the Divine presence everywhere even when we are active in the affairs of the world. We then feel that by His will and power alone we are doing everything. In such a state we are incapable of doing any harm to anybody. On the other hand, our actions will go to

relieve the distress of others and give peace and happiness to all. So let us understand that the aim of this human life is to realise God by which alone we can attain eternal happiness and peace. Our thoughts must dwell on Him, our tongue must take His name and all our actions must be done as service to Him. In conclusion, Ramdas prays to the Almighty Lord of the universe, who dwells in the hearts of us all, that He may reveal Himself in your heart and fill you through and through with his radiance, joy, strength and wisdom. May His grace and blessings ever pour upon you all !

AT THE HU YEW SEAH SCHOOL, PENANG.

1st December, 1954.

God-Realisation

Beloved Friends,—Today Ramdas is asked to speak to you on God-realisation. God-realisation is a state which does not admit of expression. We can only experience that state and know what it is. Still great sages and saints who have realised God have tried to express what it is for the benefit of those who are striving to attain that blessed state. A God-realised soul does not develop horns or look unusual or extra-ordinary as distinguished from others. He is like anyone of us in external appearance and mode of life, but inwardly he is an illumined soul ever one with God, ever conscious of God and ever filled with Divine peace and bliss. He radiates love, joy and light, wherever he goes, and in whatever condition he remains. His heart is pure as crystal. The love that he gives to everybody is a spontaneous outflow from him. It flows out to everybody alike, just as a burning lamp which gives light to all who approach it, or like the sun who gives light and heat to all alike. The saint gives his grace, love and kindness to everybody who approaches him whether he is a good man or a bad man. He does not see any distinctions. Thus a God-realised soul is a blessing to humanity. He is verily an embodiment of God. He who comes in contact with such a soul is freed from all sins.

Parama Prem

Now the question is how to realise this supreme, blessed and beatific state of complete union with God and remain ever in the intoxication of divine bliss and peace. That requires, in the first place, the grace of a saint. About grace, Ramdas spoke to you yesterday. When grace is there, your progress becomes easy. It awakens in you a great longing for God and thereafter your heart hungers for God and nothing else. This hunger makes you remember Him constantly. A miser who is attached to wealth thinks always of wealth. So also when the devotee's heart is awakened and he has intense longing for God, he remembers God constantly. Many people say that when they repeat God's name they cannot concentrate upon God. 'This is because they have no longing for Him. This longing for God and holding God as our dearest object of love is Bhakti. Bhakti, as described in the Narada Bhakti Sutra, is Parama Prem—greatest love for God. When you have the greatest love for God, automatically your mind will be remembering Him. Otherwise your mind will run here and there, because you have greater love for worldly things. You must have *Parama Prem* for God. When this *Prem* or Bhakti is created in the heart by the contact of a saint, then you cannot but pine for Him and hunger for Him day and night and therefore remember Him constantly and become mad of Him. It is a divine madness that seizes you in this state. All allurements of the world leave you and all the pleasures of the senses appear as dust or ashes to you. Your one longing is to realise God, to feel Him and to see Him. This is the

kind of devotion, the concentrated, one-pointed and entire longing for God, that brings you near Him and ultimately makes you feel one with Him.

Four Steps to Final Achievement

You now become aware that you are not the body, senses or the mind, but the supreme Self. This is what is called *Atma Jnana* or realisation of the Atman. It is not a new thing that you achieve by effort. It was there already, but only now you become conscious of it. To become conscious of this, the mind-screen must disappear, and it can disappear only by constant remembrance of the Divine. For constant remembrance of the Divine, the repetition of God's name is prescribed. By intense practice, concentration on God becomes possible, remembrance becomes continuous and the mind becomes pure and still. The pure and still mind is, in fact, no mind. It is pure Spirit, it is the Truth. When the screen of the mind disappears, you become aware that you are the immortal Reality or Truth. The whole universe is pervaded by that silent, serene and static Spirit or Atman. You get the joy of the Supreme Self. This is the first step. The second step is to see the whole universe as the manifestation of the Self. This is *Viswarupa Darshan.*

The third step is to realise that one Divine Power activates everything in the universe, makes the sun shine, the breeze blow and the plants grow, and in general makes everything live and move. We must submit to that Power and feel conscious always that that Power is supreme. This is what we call surrender

to the will of God or to the power of God. The I-ness makes you feel that you are doing everything, but when your surrender is complete, the I-ness or the ego-consciousness disappears. The desires, the longings, the consciousness of the body that gives rise to the ego-sense which makes you feel that you are separate from everything else and that you are a perishable body subject to birth, growth and death—all these delusions that had made you perfectly oblivious of your birthless and deathless state, now vanish completely, and you live, move and have your being in Him. In this state it is that you feel liberated like a bird set free from the cage.

There is yet a fourth state. Even after getting all these exalted experiences—oneness with God, oneness with the universe and oneness with the universal Power—you still maintain a constant fellowship of the Divine, who appears as your Guru or in any other form, and you never lose contact with Him. You feel His company ever with you. So these are the four kinds of transformation that takes place in you. But even that is not all. You must also realise a state which is unthinkable, incomprehensible, which is all these and still beyond all these. This is the all-comprehensive, all-inclusive, all-transcendent Godhead in whom everything exists and there is nothing outside Him. Therefore, in the scriptures it is said that God is *achintya*. You cannot think of what He is and what He is not. If you say He is bliss, you are wrong. If you say He is not bliss, you are wrong. He is inexpressible. How can you describe Him in terms of speech and thought?

Knowledge through Experience

People try to expound what He is. That is why there is so much clash. One says God is one and another says He is two. Yet a third one says God is only personal and yet another says He is impersonal. This is all because the man who has realised God cannot say what He is and what He is not. The Infinite and Eternal cannot be expressed by the help of our puny intellect. Those who have experience can alone know Him. They say it is like the dumb man tasting sugar and vainly endeavouring to express its taste to others. Even if he has the power to talk, he will not be able to express it. What about a dumb man then? So it is with the realised soul. He goes about telling everybody what the state is, but he can never fully express it. He attempts and exhibits his helplessness. His contact however is powerful. It is not by talking with him and hearing him that you get the highest benefit, but by his very contact. He radiates peace and joy, and when you come within his aura, you feel elevated.

Three Ways of Spiritual Contact

Saints have got three ways of quickening the soul and creating in it a longing for God by giving a foretaste of the joy of union with God. These are: (1) by sight— when the saint's eye falls upon you, your heart is changed, becomes fertile, and is charged with emotion, joy and peace; (2) by thought — if he remembers you, that does the trick; by touch — if he touches you, the thing is done. You go to him and ask him to bless you.

He puts his hand on you and imparts a current, and you are changed. When Ramdas went to see Ramana Maharshi, he imparted to him his grace through his eyes. He gazed at Ramdas intently for a few minutes, and Ramdas' body thrilled with a strange ecstasy.

How Ramdas was Guided

Ramdas will now, in his own way, tell you how he was guided on the path of God-realisation. Buddha taught him to annihilate all desires and reach that state of perfect quiescence called Nirvana, which is equivalent to what the Hindu scriptures call Jnana. So far as the annihilation of desires is concerned, Buddha stands supreme. Krishna taught Ramdas that the whole universe is His form, and based upon this very knowledge of the all-pervading Self, one attains Moksha. Jesus taught him that we should love all beings equally and our hearts should flow out in love to all beings. The infinite love that is at the very basis of our life should be realised. It is love that dissolves all diversities into unity. If you love everybody alike, the distinction which you see between man and man, community and community, country and country, disappears. Your love will cover everybody alike. Now Ramdas is speaking to you also about Mohammed for whom he had the highest veneration, as he had for all the saints of the world. He taught us self-surrender. He said we should make Allah's will our will. So long as we have our own will, we shall always be unhappy. We want everything to happen as we will and when that does not happen we are upset.

In the early days of our practice, when our will does not prevail, we must submit to His will and say, "Oh God, Thy will be done," and our mind becomes calm. Ultimately our surrender becomes so complete that we come to know that everything happens by His will. There is no other will working at all. Your will is false. The Divine will is everything. This is called complete surrender; elimination of the individual will and making God's will our will. This we learn from the teachings of Mohammed.

From the teachings of Guru Nanak Dev we learn that the continuous remembrance of God's name is the only Sadhana. Ramdas went to the Punjab and met many Sikh saints, of whom there was one named Bhai Vir Singhji, a great votary of God's name. When we were parting after a few days' stay together, he came to Ramdas and said that he had a request to make to Ramdas. Ramdas said, "You are a Mahatma, you are a saint, and for Ramdas you are Ram Himself. What do you mean by asking a favour from this humble servant?" He said, "You call me Ram. I do not want to be Ram. I want only Ramnam. You should bless me so that I can have Ramnam always on my tongue." Those who keep the Divine name continuously on their lips do not want even the Darshan of God. They want only the Name on their lips. Divine name is nectar, and when you drink that nectar every second, why do you want anything else? In the early days of Ramdas' Sadhana, as willed by God, he was repeating God's name constantly. It was running like a stream in his mind. Ramdas drank and drank this nectar until the

drink and Ramdas became one. He never knew that the drink would make him like itself. So, duality disappeared. Friends ask him why he does not repeat the Name now. Ramdas says, the person who repeated it has disappeared. The servant has become one with the master. The Name brought the servant and the master together and made them fuse into each other losing all distinctions. The Name has become everything for him. The universe is His name, because the Name and God are not different. The Name is God Himself.

Saints are Kingly Doctors

Saints want everybody to be liberated from the thraldom of desire and ignorance. They are called Raja Vaidyas or kingly doctors. Ordinary doctors relieve the ills of the body by operations, etc., but this physician is greater because he heals the disease of the mind. The mind is stricken with worldly desire, *trishna* or *Vasana*. How to cure it? One saint has beautifully expressed it. He says, "If you touch the feet of a saint and take the dust of his feet, that very instant all the Vasanas in you are burnt to ashes." Then you will repeat God's name and it will taste very sweet. Saint's company is, therefore, very important and essential to lead you to the goal. God-realisation is not an easy thing. However hard one may struggle, one cannot attain it. By a saint's grace alone, one can get it. Many are trying to get God-realisation by such practices as Hatha Yoga, etc. Ramdas does not say that these are not necessary. They are useful for the purpose of remembering God constantly. Ramdas had done all

these things. He had fasted, but it was only in order that he might keep the Name always on his tongue. When the Name is on the tongue, the mind is pure, and as soon as the Name disappears the mind becomes impure. The Name disappears when the body becomes sluggish. Continuous remembrance of God depends upon physical environments, food and so many other conditions. So you have to regulate your life accordingly. Then alone all the desires will disappear and you will become egoless and humble. There must be complete self-effacement in us. Then alone we can rise. They say in Hindi that through *Abhiman* or pride we sink and through humility we float. Let us humble ourselves and take His name with all devotion and feel that He is guiding us and that by His guidance we are doing everything. If we know this, we shall never go wrong, and shall always follow the path of righteousness.

Glory of Saints

God-realisation means dwelling always in God, feeling one with Him. So there is no place for hatred towards anybody. For a God-realised soul there is nothing to gain because he is happy and contented within himself. He has no desire for the things of the world, and has no sense of differentiation at all. This state gives rise to waves of ecstasy in him and his whole being is filled with divine light and divine lustre. He lives a life of spontaneity. There is no such thing as toiling and moiling for him. He has no cares or worries and no thought of the morrow. He has transcended time, space and causation. He has become the

very embodiment of God, the very mould of God. He is blissful and spontaneous like a child. What prevents us from leading the spontaneous life is the ego. It has entered into us and spoilt the whole life. God is an eternal child. Therefore it is said that we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven unless we become childlike. Saints are childlike. They are not cunning. They do not distrust anybody. They are not calculating. They have nobody to hate, no illwill, no spirit of vengeance. They are a mountain of patience. They bear everything calmly. Even if somebody abuses them they do not retaliate.

There is a beautiful song by a Maharashtrian saint, *"Dhanya Jagi . . . ."* : "He is the blessed soul who is dancing in ecstasy with God's name on his lips. He is always inebriated with the intoxication of the Divine name. For him, pleasure and pain are alike. Joy and grief are alike. He is kind to all living creatures in the world. He is the very flame or torch of Jnana and his heart is rising in waves out of love for all beings in the world. As regards the pleasures of the senses, he is perfectly detached. He has no idea of I and you. He is always contented." Ramdas remembered this song when he spoke to you about the contentment of a saint. He has nothing to gain. He is satisfied whatever be the situation in which God places him, because he knows God pervades everywhere and there is no place where He is not. The saint is full, complete and perfect. The notion of "I know and I do not know" has been thrown away by him. Though he lives in the world just like anyone of us, his mind is ever engaged

in the remembrance of God, whether he is awake or asleep. He is in tune with the Infinite always. These are the characteristics of a saint. It is said contentment is a continual feast.

Q: How can we create faith or love for God in those who have no love or faith?

Ramdas: By ourselves loving God and living a real life. By loving God we love our fellow-beings. If we say we love God and do not love our fellow-beings, others will ask us: "Is this love for God? If it is so, we do not want to love God at all." So if you want to create love and faith in others, you must set an example to them by yourself living the right life.

CEYLON

AT THE SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, COLOMBO.
3rd December, 1954.

Sri Ramakrishna—an Avatar

Beloved forms of Ramdas' Eternal Master and Mother, — You are verily, for Ramdas, the manifestations of the Divine. As such he is addressing you a few words, not to teach you, but only to express his overflowing feelings at finding himself in this holy atmosphere, for which he is deeply grateful to Swami Prematmananda and the management of the Ramakrishna Mission, Colombo. We have assembled here under the divine auspices and grace of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. Sri Ramakrishna had liberated millions of souls from the bondage of ignorance and he is doing the same even now, and will do so for ever. Ramakrishna is an Avatar, occupying the same rank as Buddha, Krishna, Rama and Jesus. You should not consider him to be an ordinary mortal who was illumined with iight, love and wisdom of God. He had descended on earth specially for the uplift and liberation of mankind. What he teaches us is that we should free ourselves from ignorance and realise that we are Brahman.

His Teachings

Brahman is the undifferentiated, all-pervading, static, divine spirit and existence. We should gain

this knowledge in order to be free from the bondage of Karma and attain a state of beatitude in which we enjoy eternal bliss and peace. Ramakrishna taught us that we should follow the path of devotion, and by constant remembrance of and meditation on the Divine, surrender ourselves to Him and be free from the ego-sense, realising our identity with Him. After realising that we are the static. all-pervading Brahman, we are to realise the presence of the Divine everywhere and behold the whole universe as the expression of Brahman. Ramakrishna himself passed through intense Sadhana, though there was no need for him to do any Sadhana. Whatever he did was for our sake, so that we might follow the path, which he chalked out for us, in order to realise God in all His aspects. God is not merely the static Brahman, but he is also the universal manifestation and the dynamic power active in the universe. So we should have not only Atma Jnana but also the *Viswarupa Darshan*. Lastly, our entire life should be dedicated to the universal Mother or Shakti who is activating all the creatures of this world. So long as we retain even the smallest ego-sense, we are separate from that Divine existence. It is not in Samadhi alone that we can be in tune with the infinite. We can realise God and feel His presence always, in all walks of life and in all activities, and know that all the movements and forms are His. It is easy to sit silent and concentrate the mind upon the Divine and lose ourselves in Him. But when we are caught in the world, we lose that consciousness and are affected by the conflicts of the opposite forces, with the result that

we forget the Divine. Even when we are active and moving in the world, we must be conscious of the unity of life and be free from the sense of diversity, both in the Spirit and also in the manifestations. We must be one with all existence in the various forms. In the Bhagavad Gita, God has taught us that we have to see Him everywhere and in everything. Just as a thread passing through the beads of a rosary makes the beads into one rosary, so also we must be able to see all the forms as the expression of one indwelling Spirit. This simile has been improved upon by a Maharashtrian saint who says that the Divine is like a gold wire on which are strung gold beads. So the manifestation is He and the unmanifest Reality is also He. As unmanifest He is the calm, static and silent Spirit, and in the manifestation He seems to be moving and changing. So in both aspects—the manifest and the unmanifest—it is the one supreme God who is all-comprehensive, all-inclusive and at the same time all-transcendent. This supreme Godhead has to be realised by us, and how this was done by Ramakrishna has been shown in his life and teachings.

Our Duty

It is not merely that we have to read books and adore him, but we must imbibe the spirit of his teachings, draw lessons from his simple life, and walk in his footsteps. By doing so we shall purify our hearts and behold the Divine within and without. This was his message to us all and it is still reverberating and will continue to do so eternally. He often hammered upon those who came in contact with him that the object of

human life was to realise God. Without this aim, we are just like animals. He always talked about the necessity of Vairagya for developing Bhakti or devotion for God. Vairagya is a sense of detachment from sense-objects. We see only diversity outside and we are attached to the objects, but not to the indwelling Spirit. God has definitely told us that He is seated in the hearts of all beings and forms. Whenever we see any form, we must see not only the form but also the indwelling Reality. This is true vision and it liberates us from the sense of diversity and makes us realise the oneness of all existence. This is the message of our Rishis. It is not merely in particular places or in solitude that we should practise this vision of life, but also in the market-places and busy thoroughfares. We must feel the Divine presence always about us. This is called Sahaja Samadhi.

Sahaja Samadhi

There are so many kinds of Samadhi. The other states of Samadhi are changing, they come and go. Sahaja Samadhi is the normal state. This is constant. You are moving in the Divine and are one with the Divine at all times. Your eyes behold Him everywhere and your love flows out towards everybody equally. There is none whom you dislike, because there is no sense of duality. You see yourself alone everywhere. As you see yourself in a mirror you see the whole universe as the expression of your soul and that soul is not the individual soul but the universal or cosmic Soul. It is cosmic consciousness. That is what you have to develop by devotional practices, by singing

God's name, by going to temples and having the contact of saints. If you surrender yourself to God, you get by His grace the knowledge of Brahman, and you can then see the universe as the manifestation of the Mother. That is the aim of our life.

We must be serious in our endeavour to realise the Divine and fully dedicate ourselves to the Divine Mother and do everything according to Her will. Our will and power is all false. We think we are doing everything by our will and power. This is totally untrue. Those who know the truth tell us that we are unnecessarily worrying about things. All these experiences come to us through the grace of great souls like Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. Ramakrishna came down to the earth to show what it is to become a God-man. We should not merely worship God as Spirit, but we must become one with Him. This is Atma Jnana and is the basis of universal vision. The Bhagavad Gita has shown us what *Viswarupa Darshan* is. It is to see everything in the world as the expression of the Divine. This is a sublime vision in which there is no distinction or diversity. There is nothing existing different from ourselves. When Ramakrishna was worshipping the idol of Kali in the temple, he used to take some flowers to adore the image, but instead of putting the flowers on the image he would put them on his own head. That means he himself became the Mother and wherever he turned his eyes, there the Divine Mother stood revealed. It is the Divine Mother who is moving the whole universe. It is She who creates, preserves and destroys. Shiva and Shakti are the two aspects of the

one Supreme Reality. In the Tantric philosophy, Paramashiva is Shiva and Shakti combined. He is at once both and beyond both. In the Bhagavad Gita, the all-transcendent Godhead is described as Purushottama. In Vedanta the same thing has been spoken of as Brahman and Maya. Brahman and Maya together form the one supreme Being which is beyond Brahman and Maya. So in all these philosophies we find the same truth in different words. That is the supreme summit of spiritual experience to be attained in this very life, so that we may be entirely free from the fetters of desires.

God's Name is the Path

The easiest way to attain this beatific vision, Ramdas can tell you, is the repetition of God's holy name. Ramdas has read in the teachings of all the great sages and saints of India, about the glory of the Divine name. Sri Ramakrishna and the Holy Mother also have been telling us to repeat God's name and do Japa, because it is so very easy. We need not have any paraphernalia to repeat God's name. We can utter it at all times and at all places. After practising various types of discipline, Sri Ramakrishna found the repetition of God's name most efficacious and suitable. Saint Tulsidas says that God's name is like a light that you keep on the doorstep. You can get light inside as well as outside. So if you have the Name on your tongue, you will have the divine light within you and also everywhere about you. Such is the power of the Divine name. He who has uttered the Divine name constantly can alone know its sweetness and power.

Ramdas can vouch for the power of the Name, but you should repeat it without desiring anything from God, As soon as you repeat the Name, you start getting bliss. It is not that anything can be attained after repeating the Name for some time. The attainment is immediate. This is what Ramdas felt. The sweetness of the Name is such that it will not leave you. Ramdas went on drinking the sweetness of the Name until the drink and Ramdas became one. After that, the repetition automatically stopped and he was filled with ecstasy which has remained with him ever since, without any effort. People ask him why he stopped repeating it. Ramdas tells them that the repeater has disappeared. There is nothing but joy, and this joy has been with him for the last thirty years. He has been going about telling everybody to repeat the name of God constantly.

All the names of God are equally powerful. You may repeat the name Shiva, Rama, Krishna or any other Name you like with full faith and devotion, and you will see that the Name will purify you and free you from all desires and attachments. When you sit for meditation, you find the mind wandering here and there. This is because the mind is not pure. Purity can come only when you repeat God's name constantly. When the mind is restless and agitated, you cannot know who you are. You think you are only a bundle of flesh and bones. But when your mind has been purified and made still by the practice of meditation you come to realise that you are the immortal Spirit.

Now you have all been singing God's name. The vibrations created thereby were merging our mind in them. By hearing the sound of the Name, the mind gets absorbed in it. It forgets to run about because it is imbued or intoxicated with the sweetness of the Name. All the Vasanas and desires within us are uprooted, and so the mind becomes calm. For progress on the spiritual path, Satsang or contact of great souls is an important thing. You must see them, hear their nectarine words, follow their advice and take God's name. This will liberate us from all desires, elevate us and give us the joy of the Eternal. This is possible only by contact of saints, and by taking God's holy name. If these two things are done, you are saved. The object of all Sadhana is only to keep God's name continuously on our lips. No Sadhana can itself take us to God. It is only a means so that we may repeat the Name continuously and have unbroken remembrance of God. When remembrance leaves us, the ego-sense takes hold of us and the mind becomes restless. As soon as there is remembrance the ego-sense disappears and we are in tune with God. Ramdas will stop this talk by invoking Sri Ramakrishna's blessings to help you all attain this supreme goal. May he grant you continuous remembrance of God and may he bless you with the supreme vision, experience and realisation!

AT THE SINDHI COMMUNITY CENTRE, COLOMBO.
4th December, 1954.

Devotion and Self-Surrender

Beloved Friends,—Ramdas is going to speak to you now on devotion and self-surrender. You all know that this precious human life is granted to us by God only for realising Him. The aim of human life and all lives in the world is to attain immortal happiness and peace. This immortal happiness and peace can be achieved only by realising God, because God stands for immortal bliss and peace. The very nature of God is pure joy. If you realise Him, you attain that pure joy. This consummation or attainment of supreme bliss is possible only in human life, which has been endowed with all the qualities necessary for achieving this goal. So it behoves everyone of us to strive to attain this.

The Path of Devotion

The question now is how we can attain this. How can we realise God? This can be done only through one-pointed and unqualified devotion for God. Devotion takes us near Him. It makes us aware of His presence within us and everywhere about us. So the first thing necessary is that we should open some kind of relationship with Him, looking upon Him as our father, mother, or friend and our all in all. If we do this, it will be possible for us to approach Him gradually until we find Him, see Him and realise our identity with Him. So what is needed is an intense aspiration to realise Him.

By realising Him alone we can free ourselves from unhappiness and have true and lasting happiness. Our devotion to Him should be such that we should aspire only to have Him and nothing else.

Generally, devotion is practised by people, who call themselves devotees, for getting many worldly things from God. Of course, they are also devotees. You should know, however, that whatever we get from God is perishable and therefore incapable of giving us real or lasting happiness. Real happiness can come to us only when we have God who is eternal. God says He will give us whatever we pray for, but those things will not help us to have true happiness and freedom. If we want Him, He is prepared to become ours. So our aim should be to have Him and Him alone. Our prayer to Him should be that He may bless us with His vision only and enable us to be with Him, to feel His presence always with us and know that He and we are one. In that state of perfect fusion with Him, we enjoy eternal bliss and peace which are born of our identity with Him, transcending all earthly ambitions and aspirations and rising above the individual sense.

It is the individual sense that makes us think that we are merely bodies subject to birth, growth and decay. We are not individual entities, but the immortal Truth ever in tune with God. It is usual with us, whenever we are in trouble, to pray to God to free us from it. Some years ago, Ramdas came across a poem by a devotee who knew apparently what it is to pray. He prayed to God, "Oh God, do not grant my prayers." People generally ask God to grant their prayers, but

this devotee prayed that his prayers may not be granted. We, in our foolishness, pray for so many things that are not good for us. We should ask God to give us only what He thinks best for us. In this alone lies our salvation, freedom and peace. If we deny ourselves the supreme privilege of human life to attain and realise God, and waste it in pursuit of transitory sense-pleasures, we shall have to repent for it in the end. Our aim day and night should be to realise God, to get eternal happiness and freedom.

Right Prayer

So what we have to pray to God is that He should grant us one-pointed devotion for Him, so that we may lose ourselves in Him and attain our union with Him. This will release us from birth and death and give us liberation. God has thousands of attributes. We have nothing to do with those attributes. We, of course, sing about Him and His greatness. His predominant characteristic, which appeals to us and which is our mainstay, is His compassionate nature. When we approach Him with our heart full of restlessness and tumult, fed up with the external pleasures in which we are caught from day to day, and when we open out our heart to Him, asking Him to free us from the tangle of this worldly life and grant us that beatitude in which we can ever be in His presence, and enjoy pure bliss and peace, formed of His union and vision, He will surely grant our prayer. If we go to Him in this spirit of surrender and complete dedication and offer ourselves to Him so that His grace may enliven our heart

and enlighten our intellect, He will grant our prayer. It depends upon how we approach Him.

You have been singing the name and praises of God. There are some songs which melt the heart of a devotee when he approaches Him in that spirit. Those songs were sung by great sages and saints, and by those songs they taught us how to pray to God and in what spirit we should approach Him. That prayer which is offered from the core of our heart is always listened to by God, because He is the friend of the helpless. He is more loving to us than our mother, because his love is unlimited. If we approach Him in a spirit of complete surrender, He will take us up just like the mother when her child approaches her in a miserable condition. God is our father and mother. If we approach Him in all sincerity and with intense longing, He will shower His grace on us and liberate us from ignorance, granting us the supreme blessedness of union with Him. When we are one with Him, we shall have no more cares and anxieties and all that we do will be done spontaneously and cheerfully. It is not that we are free from activities in this state. He makes us do actions and we shall feel we are doing everything by His will. It is the Divine power that pervades the whole universe and activates us. When we surrender ourselves to this Divine power which we call Shakti, She takes us unto Herself. Then we come to realise that it is not by our will that we are doing anything but by Her power. When we live such a life, Her protecting hands are always with us. We shall be as safe as a child in the hands of its mother. God is all

compassion, all mercy, all goodness and all love. If we realise God as such and feel His presence everywhere about us, we have attained our goal. Nowhere shall we find anything except Him.

Need for Humility

We have lost our contact with Him. Therefore what we have to do is to contact Him again. In this connection Ramdas remembers a Hindi saying, *"Jal me meena pyasi. . . . ."*. "The fish is in the water and it says it is thirsty. Hearing this I cannot but laugh". We are ever living and moving in God who is happiness and supreme bliss. Yet we say we are unhappy. Why are we unhappy ? Because we have lost the awareness of that supreme Spirit which is the basis of this universe. The whole universe is filled with His presence. To realise this truth we should surrender ourselves to the Divine Mother and Master, who is our all in all. How does the fish feel thirsty even though it is in the water? As long as it moves erect in water, the water does not get into its gills, but when the fish bends, it can drink the water. So long as we do not bend — feel we are doing everything ourselves and are proud — we cannot have the experience of the joy in which we are living and moving. When we give up this pride and surrender ourselves to the Divine Mother, the ego-sense disappears and we shall enjoy bliss and peace. The intellect within us is arrogant and becomes the cause of our pride. If we bend down in all humility before the Divine, we shall have His vision and we can enjoy the bliss which is our birthright as human beings. If

we become aware of the Divine within and see the whole universe as the expression of the Divine, our life becomes blissful. Otherwise, we are caught, as it were, in a cage and are miserable. Some kind of ignorance has seized us and we know that to free ourselves from this ignorance is the aim of life. Therefore devotion to God is the simple way by which we can completely free ourselves from this ego-sense and realise that this universe is filled with one Divine Existence.

God's Protection

This vision is possible only through devotion. God says that He is not with the Yogi, not with the Tapaswin in the forest, but with the devotee who sings His glory and greatness with all love and devotion. So if we, in all humility and devotion, take His name constantly and sing His glory, we shall find Him and attain union with Him. By attaining union with Him, our ego-sense will disappear and we shall behold the Divine everywhere. This vision is our ultimate goal. Our life will then be like that of a child, pure, innocent and flowing. There will be no cares or worries, because we shall be wholly under the protection of the Divine. Our heart will be filled with compassion, love and mercy. The devotee, who has entrusted himself completely to Him, will be protected in mysterious ways. We have got many instances of such protection. The instances of Draupadi, Prahlada and many others are before us.

There is one Sloka in the Bhagavad Gita which describes beautifully how God protects those who are depending upon Him :

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥

"To those people who worship Me alone, thinking of no other, to those ever harmonious I bring full security." We can tell you from our own experience how this Sloka has been fully demonstrated and verified in our lIfe. Ramdas' new life, in which he gave himself up entirely to the Divine, started 33 years ago, and thereafter the Divine took him up and since then Ramdas has been feeling he is a child of God and he is made to do everything by His will. In that state of self-surrender Ramdas feels happy in all situations and conditions. because he knows they are brought about by the Divine Master and Mother—God—who is all compassion, all mercy, and all kindness. He is verily an ocean of joy and love. We have such a great Master and Mother for our refuge. Where is the cause then for our anxiety? The whole universe is for you the Divine and nothing but the Divine. Your heart is always flowing out with love equally to the whole creation, because the whole creation is the form of your Eternal Beloved. This is the realisation we should aim at.

Take Refuge in the Name

There are so many desires worrying us day and night. In this condition there is only one refuge and that is God, and the easiest path to approach Him is the path of devotion. Devotion or Bhakti is intense longing for God above everything else. In that spirit we should remember Him and take His holy name.

His name is the boat that takes us across the sea of life. This has been declared to us by all great sages and saints. We can keep the Name on our tongue and our heart in tune with God all the time. This practice of taking God's name continuously will enable us to remember Him without any break and we shall gradually develop the consciousness of His presence within us. We should not run after worldly ambitions and transitory pleasures. These things do not contribute to our real happiness. We must free ourselves from these and pray to God to give us strength to remember Him constantly. When our mind is completely absorbed in Him, no desires will harass us.

Desires are like so many scorpions stinging the mind. They sting us constantly and we become most miserable. All great saints like Tukaram, Ekanath, Jnandev. Namdev, Kabir and many others have told us with one voice that God's name is the most simple way to remember God. By taking God's name, we shall be drinking nectar, because the Name is nectar. Name itself is God and God is Bliss. Therefore the Name is also Bliss. So it follows that when we take the Name we enjoy Bliss.

AT THE VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY HALL, COLOMBO.
5th December, 1954.

Guru and Guru Kripa

Beloved Manifestations of the Divine, — Ramdas is going to speak to you today on the greatness of Guru and Guru Kripa. Guru is the supreme liberator of a bound soul. As long as we have not come in contact with a divine personality, there is no hope of our being liberated from the bondage of nescience or ignorance. We go to temples, read scriptures, visit places of pilgrimage, but by doing all this we cannot hope to be free from ignorance. We may achieve some merit as a result of which we may get some material benefit, something worldly, such as success and prosperity in life. But if we want to be free from the cycle of births and deaths and attain supreme knowledge of the Self and union with God, it is absolutely necessary that we should be blessed by the Guru.

Power of Grace

The very name 'Guru' signifies that he is one who can dispel darkness and bring light into our hearts. Darkness is our forgetfulness of the Reality. In order to awaken us to the consciousness of the Reality and turn our mind towards Him, Guru's grace is essential. The Divine touch of the Guru alone can remove our ignorance and lead us on the path of Truth and ultimately enable us to realise the Truth. You know that when you are in search of Truth there are so many obstacles on the path. Mainly it is the mind that

creates the obstacles. When you want to think of God and meditate on Him, you find it difficult to do so. Your mind is running away and thinks of worldly objects. It is this that prevents you from having steady meditation, But you may depend upon it, that any effort you may make and any struggle you may pass through will not enable you to control the mind, unless the mind is dominated by the influence of a living divine personality whose touch alone can infuse strength in your mind for concentration.

Examples of Guru Kripa

The contact of great souls who have realised God is therefore essential for your salvation. If you are a real seeker of God, then surely you will come in contact with such a great saint. When you get his contact you must feel that you are not only blessed but are also saved. Ramdas can give you the instance of Swami Vivekananda in whose name this Society has been formed and in whose name this building stands. How did that ordinary boy, who was then attending college, become Swami Vivekananda? You all know that it was by the contact of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. He used to go to see Sri Ramakrishna and gradually came under his influence. Thereafter he was attracted more and more to Sri Ramakrishna until at last he was so much influenced by the great sage that his life turned completely towards God. He became the disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, who gave him all the spiritual wealth which he had gathered during the years of his hard and tremendous austerities. The supreme grace of Sri

Ramakrishna illumined the heart of Swami Vivekananda and removed from it all impurities. Swami Vivekananda became a world-renowned personality. He carried the message of Vedanta to the four corners of the world. He taught that everything is Brahman.

Vedanta teaches us : *"Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma"*. This is the message of the Vedanta and it behoves everyone of us to realise this. This is possible only by the grace of the Guru. Without a Guru there is no salvation. Krishna, Buddha, Shankara, Ramanuja and many other great saints and sages of India also got illumination only through the grace, through the contact, through the influence of a Guru. So it has been enjoined upon us by all great saints that we should, in the first place, contact a saint and be influenced by him so that we may become mere instruments in his hands. When Guru's grace descends on us, we feel that he dwells in our heart, and when we feel conscious of that, the ego-sense disappears. We then see the whole universe as the manifestation of the Guru or God. This is the state we have to attain by the grace of the Guru.

What the Guru does

We must first believe in him, contact him and be under his influence. Physically he may be far away, but we can feel his presence with us, because Guru is the all-pervading Truth, eternal and impersonal. He and God are not different. He is the supreme knowledge, power and wisdom. This is what the Guru is. Such a Guru is in our heart. He is not different from us. But

there must be somebody to tell us that he is within us. Guru comes, teaches us and gives us the knowledge or experience that comes to us later. Ramakrishna Paramahamsa gave the experience and knowledge of the Self to Swami Vivekananda. So also, by Guru's touch, or Guru's look, or even by the transference of thought from the Guru, the disciple is at once awakened within to the consciousness of his real nature and being. You know Sri Shankara has composed a song in which he says, *"Satsangatwe nissangatwam . . . ."* We should not run after the material things of the world, which are perishable and which we shall not be able to take with us when we depart. We are here to attain Moksha or liberation from the thraldom of desires so that we can enjoy immortal bliss. How can we get this? It is possible only through the grace of a realised soul. A realised soul alone can kindle another soul. Going to temples alone will not do. Reading books alone will not do. Our aspiration must lead us to the feet of the Guru, or bring the Guru to us and liberate us. Therefore, it is a tradition in India that we should surrender ourselves to a divine personality. When Ramdas was in Europe, he met many Christians who asked him whom they should accept as their Master. Ramdas told them that they might accept Christ as their spiritual Master.

AT THE HINDU COLLEGE, COLOMBO.
6th December, 1954.

Under the auspices of the Hindu Association of Ceylon.

Bhagavad Gita

Beloved Embodiments of Ramdas' Divine Master and Mother, — Ramdas is going to speak to you today on Srimad Bhagavad Gita. It is in the fitness of things that he should speak on this subject, as today is the Gita Jayanti day. The Gita is a great scripture that came into the world because of Lord Krishna's grace on Arjuna. The discourse of Lord Krishna comprises 18 chapters. The Bhagavad Gita is all-comprehensive, because it is the essence of all the Hindu scriptures like Vedas, Upanishads, Srutis, Smritis, Puranas and Itihasas. All these scriptures have been churned. as it were, and this butter-like essence has been drawn from them and presented to us for our guidance, so that by following the teachings embodied in it, we may reach spiritual perfection—the realisation of God in all His aspects. The Bhagavad Gita teaches us the synthesis of three Yogas — Jnana, Bhakti and Karma. God has been presented to us in the Bhagavad Gita as an all-comprehensive Being, as the supreme Purushottama, who is at once the omniscient existence, infinite love and almighty power. The three Yogas relate to our approach to the Divine by means of these three attributes.

Omniscient existence of God can be gained only when we attune our intellect to the infinite, all-

pervading, static Brahman, which is our real existence. After this experience, we have to behold the whole universe as the expression of that Brahman, and to love all beings and creatures in it equally. Thirdly, and as a result of that devotion, we have to surrender ourselves completely to the divine power active in this manifestation, so that our ego-sense may be completely eliminated both by the knowledge we have gained through self-realisation, and by dedicating ourselves to Him in our active dynamic life.

Three Sections of the Gita

Ramdas found by a close study of the Bhagavad Gita that it can be divided into three sections. The first section treats of Jnana Yoga, the second of Bhakti Yoga and the third of Tantra Yoga. Before we can realise God in all His comprehensiveness, we have to realise the basic Spirit underlying the manifest life. The human body, as it is seen, is not everything. There is a substratum for this manifest life. That is the supreme Spirit, eternal, calm, silent, nameless and formless. We have to realise that Self first, through purification of the mind, concentration and meditation. Then alone we can proceed further to know God in his integral form, expression and being. So in the first section, Jnana Yoga has been taught as the first step towards realisation of God. Thereafter we shall be able to develop a state in which the whole universe will be seen as the expression of the Self. This you will find in the second section, where the universal vision has been described. It is taught here that you

have to realise the infinite love dwelling in your heart and give it to the entire creation. This is said to be devotion. The third section teaches that by surrendering ourselves to the Divine Mother and eliminating the ego-sense completely we get the experience of the Karma Yoga or Tantra Yoga — the realisation of the supremacy of the divine Shakti in the manifestation that we see before us.

The Message of the Gita

God is dynamic and static and at the same time beyond both. He is the all-comprehensive and all-transcendent complete Godhead. This is the Purushottama who has been presented to us in the Bhagavad Gita, for realisation. Lord Krishna Himself is the embodiment of the Purushottama. He is not merely a silent, all-pervading witness, but a dynamic power and force, revealed in a particular form for the redemption of humanity. This great scripture can save people from the thraldom of ignorance and ego-sense and elevate them to a status which baffles expression. God is described in the Bhagavad Gita as the vast manifestation before us and the power active in this manifestation. It is said in it that we must perform actions as if we are not performing actions at all. We must see action in inaction, and inaction in action. This seems to be a very puzzling message for us. It is difficult to understand how we can be active and inactive at the same time. It was in this spirit that Arjuna was asked to fight in the battlefield. He was to fight in such a way as if he was not fighting at all. This is possible only when we

know the supreme Godhead as, at once, Purusha and Prakriti. Prakriti alone is active. Our body, and our vital, mental and intellectual being are all activated by the Divine Shakti. The Purusha is a silent witness, unaffected, dispassionate and detached. He is the all-pervading Self. We are doing nothing as the all-pervading Self, but only as Prakriti, made up of the five elements, senses, mind and intellect. We are activated by Divine Shakti, which makes us do everything. Divine Shakti alone is responsible for everything that happens in this world, When we know this, our ego-sense will be wiped off completely. Now we know God as at once dynamic and static — Prakriti and Purusha. When we have fully realised this through the knowledge of the Atman and utter surrender of ourselves to the divine Shakti, then it is we know that we are doing and not doing at the same time. This is the message of the Gita.

The Secret of Karma Yoga

The secret of the Gita teaching is that it makes us live a life of freedom. There are in the Bhagavad Gita two paths pointed out to us. One is Karma Yoga and the other Karma Sannyasa. The Lord says Karma Yoga is better, because by practising it we can do whatever is enjoined upon us to do for the world, and still remain unattached like the lotus leaf that remains in the water and still untouched by the water. As Purusha we are not doing anything, but as Prakriti we are doing everything. Arjuna wanted to run away from the battlefield. He thought that by abstaining from war

he could avoid committing sins. He was highly perturbed, as war involved the killing of his relations and friends standing on the opposite side in the battle-field. The Lord then told him that there was no need to flee from the battlefield, and taught him the secret of Karma Yoga which made him feel as if he was not fighting at all.

The Gita, therefore, teaches us that we should not run away from the activity allotted to us by the Divine. Only, we must do such actions without the ego-sense. We must become instruments in the hands of the Divine Shakti and cheerfully and willingly do actions without being affected by them. The results of our actions have nothing to do with us. We are simply to act at the command of the Divine Power and remain at the same time as an unaffected witness. This path is superior to that of Karma Sannyasa, renouncing the actions that we are expected to do. No action can bind us. But what binds us is the sense that we are doing everything. Actions by themselves are neither sinful nor meritorious. When we are free from the sense of doership we are made to do actions for the good of humanity, because our vision then is universalised. We can then have no likes and dislikes. We shall not be affected by the external contacts and our love will flow out towards everybody equally. We shall find joy in the very doing of actions. In that state, work becomes worship. The root itself becomes the fruit for us. The actions flow out of us from that divine source which is pure bliss. And anything that comes out of bliss must be bliss itself.

From the static Brahman rises this Prakriti which is only another aspect of Brahman. So it is said that the world is the manifestation of Ananda, because it has risen from Ananda. Our actions, our words, and whatever we do must be nothing but the waves of Ananda. This is realised when we are completely free from the ego-sense, at all times, whether we are active or not active, whether we sit silent in meditation or are engaged in work. In meditation what happens is that our individuality merges in the infinite Existence within us and we realise that we are Brahman. But when we are active in life we are caught again in the likes and dislikes and the mind gets disturbed. Therefore we are asked to behold the Divine everywhere. Then only we shall be free from the pairs of opposites and be able to work without being affected. Karma Yoga is the principal path which the Bhagavad Gita teaches us and it is based upon the knowledge of the Self and the Universal Vision, and lastly based upon our utter surrender to the Divine will and power. We feel ourselves as instruments of that power and whatever we do is done by the will of the Divine. "Not my will but Thy will be done." We are then doing everything not for fulfilling our own plans but the plans of the Divine, which serve to bring joy and peace into the world. We can, therefore, never do harm to anybody, and our life will flow on only for the good of the world.

The Easiest Sadhana

Jnana we have to get, no doubt, and that cannot be got easily. The first thing necessary is, of course,

the contact of a Guru. The Guru, in his grace, must make us practise certain disciplines in order that we may attain Brahma Jnana. When we are walking on the path, the principal things we have to do are (1) Nishkama Seva, or selfless service, and (2) Upasana or worship. Upasana is to sit near God. We must practise some discipline by which we can feel His presence and therefore feel that we are near Him. The easiest way is the repetition of God's name and leading a pure and selfless life, in order to help those who are in suffering and who need assistance from us.

We must do all work in a selfless spirit, not with a view to get anything in return, but only to get our heart purged of all the evil desires that are lurking within. We must not consider that we are doing good to anybody, nor take pride in thinking that we have done good. We must do things in a spirit of devotion, as worship of God. Then, such work helps us to attain purity.

To feel the presence of God, we have to keep Him constantly in our thoughts. In that way alone we can remove from the mind all undesirable thoughts and ambitions that come in the way of our attaining perfect purity of mind. This is what is called Upasana. As already said, this is done by the repetition of God's holy name. We can keep the Name always in our mind. When we are sitting in the prayer room, in front of our idols, we get some joy while engaged in the worship. But there is another way by which we can always keep the remembrance and feel the resultant joy. This is the repetition of God's name. If we keep repeating the

Name during our leisure hours, that practice will enable the mind to be free from all restlessness and agitation and become still. This will lead to right meditation and illumination.

So long as the mind is restless and agitated we cannot realise our true nature But when it becomes still we come to know that we are the supreme Self. The pure and still mind is nothing but pure Spirit. The mind can become still by concentrating upon the sound of the Name. There is no need for any form. The easiest is the Upasana of the sound or Shabda Brahman. You know the universe came into being when there was a sound in the static Brahman. That sound was OM. Hence it is held to be the most primary form of Shabda Brahman.

AT THE SAIVA MANGAIYAR KALAGAM, WALLAWATTE, COLOMBO.

7th December, 1954.

Divine Mother

Beloved Manifestations of the Divine Mother,— Ramdas is a child sitting before you to talk to you about the glory of his Mother. For him the whole universe stands as the expression or embodiment of the Divine Mother and you are all, therefore. to him the veritable forms of his Mother who has accepted Ramdas as Her confiding child. You know that, if we wish to realise the supreme purpose of this life — God — we should, in the first place, surrender ourselves to the Divine Mother. It is by Her grace alone we shall be able to approach and realise the Divine as the all-pervading, infinite Spirit, whom we call God. It is by Her grace alone that all the impurities of our mind can be washed away and it is by His grace alone that we can be awakened to the awareness of the divine Spirit within us. Again, it is by Her grace alone that we shall be able to rend the veil of ignorance and come face to face with the immortal Spirit dwelling within and without us. This is the experience of all great saints and sages. We have got a shining example in our minds and that is of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa who was a votary of the Divine Mother. By his life he has shown us that we must surrender ourselves to Her, and unless we do so there is no hope of our liberation from the fetters af ignorance. So what we have to do is to pay our adorations to the Divine Mother, who has

come down to us in so many forms as Saraswati, Lakshmi and Parvati. These are the three aspects or three forms of one Divine power, by whose grace we can get liberation and realise Brahman or the all-pervading, static spirit of the Divine.

Women Saints in India

Now Ramdas will tell you the names of some women saints who have achieved the highest spiritual eminence. We have our Gargi and Maitreyi of the ancient times, and in the Middle Ages we had a galaxy of women saints such as Mirabai, Muktabai, Sakkubai, Janibai, and so many others whom we do not remember. Then you will find, in recent times, Sarada Devi in Bengal, who was an ideal woman; and coming down to the present times, there are some illumined women saints who have been a blessing to thousands of people who contacted them, heard their speeches and followed them. They are Ma Anandamayee, Godavari Mata, Rama Devi, Mother Mira of Sri Aurobindo Ashram and, last but not least, Mother Krishnabai of Anandashram. So these are some of the great women saints who have raised India's glory in the whole world. If people repeat the names of these saints, that itself will be a sort of meditation for them. Such repetition would become a Sankirtan, because these saints are the shining beacons before us, leading humanity to the divine goal.

Surrender to the Divine Mother

Ramdas is the child of the one Mother who has assumed these forms. You should look upon all beings as the expressions of the Divine Mother. She is the

Shuddha Shakti or Parashakti, beyond the Dwandwas. We are so much caught up in Aparashakti, and therefore we are in a state of duality and bondage. By surrendering ourselves to the Divine Mother, who is all love and compassion, we can, by Her grace, get our ego-sense completely obliterated and realise that by Her will and power alone the whole universe is active. When we have realised this, our life becomes safe and blissful, and we become conscious of the static, all-pervading, silent Brahman. To know this we have first to propitiate the Mother, Divine Shakti, by constantly taking Her name. Her name and God's name are not different. They cannot be separated. God and Shakti are always united and go together. When we utter God's name it is as good as taking Her name. The name of God or the Mantra, which Ramdas was repeating, was given to him by his Guru. The Mantra was "Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram." 'Om' stands for Nirguna Brahman, 'Sri' stands for Shakti, and 'Ram' stands for Saguna Brahman. So all the three aspects are there in that Mantra.

From the very beginning Ramdas has been looking upon God in these three aspects: the Divine Mother, the Master and the Purushottama beyond. As servant of the Master he used to obey Him. As Divine Master He was guiding him. As Divine Mother He was protecting this child in all conditions of life. If we are under Her protection, we shall never go astray. She will always protect us and see that we do not fall. This consciousness was with Ramdas all the time, and the Divine Mother was always protecting him. She is

the creator, protector and destroyer of the world. Surrender to Her is the only way by which we can free ourselves from ego-sense and get Her guidance. Otherwise, we shall be subject to fall on account of the many temptations. The only power that will protect us and lead us to the immortal state of bliss and peace is the Divine Mother. We must become Her children. The child and the Mother will ultimately fuse into one.

Sex Division is False

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa was absorbed in the thought of the Mother and ultimately he knew he was the Mother Herself. When flowers were placed before him for the worship of the Mother, he would put the flowers on his own head. We are all expressions of the Divine Mother. The notion of the so-called sex division in the world is really false. At least Ramdas' vision does not recognise the existence of sex distinction, because God has given him the vision to see everything as the Mother. You must have heard the story of Mira Bai, who went to see a saint. The saint refused her permission to see him on the ground that, being a Purusha (man), he was not prepared to see a woman. Hearing this, Mira Bai wondered how there could be another Purusha, as she knew of only one Purusha who was Lord Krishna, and all the other forms in the universe were, for her, forms of the Mother. This was a great revelation to that saint. If you make any distinction of sex, you will be caught in diversity, and become unhappy and miserable, being subjected to all kinds of low desires. If you transcend this

duality, which can be done only by looking upon everybody as the expression of the Shakti, you can attain peace and tranquillity.

How to lead a Pure Life

Before Ramdas closes his speech, he will tell you how to lead a pure life. This is a very difficult task because, for him, you are all expressions of the Divine Mother. Ramdas sits before you and talks to you as a child of yours. Now, for him to offer you advice, as to how to lead a pure life, is an awkward responsibility, as he does not know how to assume the position of a teacher suddenly from that of a child. That a child should be the teacher of its own mother may seem to be strange. Ramdas can only learn from the Mother and be guided by Her every moment of his life. Under Her protection he went over the whole world, and everywhere he found the Divine Mother looking after him. Ramdas is looked upon as father, mother and master, but he says that he is only a child of the Divine Mother, and how can he do anything which is not in consonance with the vision that God has granted him?

When Ramdas went to Ramana Maharshi, the Maharshi looked at Ramdas, and Ramdas felt a tremendous change in him. Ramdas was filled with peace and joy beyond description. So by mere sight a saint can raise an aspirant, but not by teaching. By teaching we cannot create such an impression. The saint looks at everybody as the manifestation of the Divine. He sees God in everybody. If one is a real Guru, he will

see Divinity in the disciple and thus make him or her advance on the path. Perhaps that is the way by which God wants Ramdas to awaken the divine light and joy in the hearts of all. If he says anything in order to teach them what they should and what they should not do, he feels a sense of difference which is not the right thing for him. He is incapable of having any kind of attitude towards anybody except that of a child. What advice has he to give? Sometimes he used to give advice, but now you are all forms of his loving Mother and what more can Ramdas tell you than this? He can only say that the Divine Mother is all in all. Keep Her remembrance always and surrender yourself to Her, and your life will be made sublime. When our ego-sense has disappeared, we see only one power existing everywhere. In fact, the ego has no existence. It is only an assumption. We are not to attain anything new, but are only to realise our true nature. When our vision is clear we see everything as it is; just as a man who is stricken with jaundice sees everything as yellow, though actually it is not yellow, and when he is free from the disease he sees all things exactly as they are. When our ignorance goes by the grace of the Divine Mother, through our complete surrender to Her, we see the whole universe as nothing but the expression of the Divine Mother. What we see in the ignorant or diseased state is not actually what the world is. The world is the manifestation of the Divine Mother. We see this only when we are free from ignorance.

Ramdas will tell you one instance. Some years ago he went to Pandharpur in the company of another Sadhu during his wanderings from place to place. We reached the place late in the evening. It was getting dark. We saw an old mother in the street and enquired of her where we could stay. She addressed us as "Mother" and asked us to follow her. On the way she started telling us the glory of the Divine Mother, and we could understand that she saw the whole world as the form of the Divine Mother. On the way we passed through a Devi's temple. This mother fell prostrate in front of the temple in a state of high emotion. Hers was indeed a grand vision.

Repeat God's Name

Ramdas' last word to you is that from his own experience he can say that he got this ineffable vision, which has filled him day and night with untold ecstasy, on account of the power of God's holy name. All of you can repeat God's name constantly, and by doing so all impurities of the mind will be washed away, and you will get the vision of the Mother everywhere as also of that supreme, static Brahman or Shiva, and you will all become the very expression of that supreme God who is at once Shiva and Shakti.

AT THE SRI SHIVA SUBRAMANIA SWAMI TEMPLE, COLOMBO.

7th December, 1954.

Saguna Upasana

Beloved Devotees of the Lord of the Universe,—It is our supreme delight today that we have assembled here under the auspices and benign presence of Lord Shiva Subramania. Before Ramdas begins to talk to you upon the subject of Saguna Upasana, let us pray, pray in all humility, to the Lord to shower His grace upon the world and bring unity, peace and harmony in it.

Need for Images in Worship

We all know that God is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. As such, it is difficult for us to approach Him unless He assumes a human form. So He has assumed for our sake a Saguna Swarupa. He is worshipped in thousands of temples all over India and Ceylon in particular forms or images. In these temples the Supreme Lord is worshipped in the form of an image. So these images are not merely, as you see, made of metal or stone. They are the very personifications of the Divine, full of splendour, power and joy. So, whenever a devotee goes to the temple and stands before the Lord in the from of the image, he addresses Him as the Lord of the universe and he prays to Him for pure devotion or for so many things that he requires in this worldly life. By the grace of the Lord he gets what he wants; that means his prayers are fulfilled.

In fact, when we place full faith in God, he grants us our desires.

What we should rightly ask Him is not the perishable objects of the world, but one-pointed devotion to Him so that we can have His Darshan. Through His grace we get Jnana or the realisation of our oneness with Him, and thereby attain immortal happiness, freedom and peace. Without knowing God in His essence, in His all-pervading consciousness, we cannot attain liberation or Moksha. God in the temple is the concrete expression of the universal Truth or Reality. Therefore His Darshan means to behold Him in the entire universe. Of course, before He grants us this Nirguna Darshan, He grants us Saguna Darshan. There are so many devotees of God who have seen Him in person before them. Ramdas has read the lives of saints in India. There were so many among them who not only worshipped God in the temples as their Beloved, but also made Him talk to them and made Him eat the food offered to Him. So the images in the temples are not lifeless and formless, but full of *chaitanya,* full of Divine radiance and power. This life and radiance is infused in the image through the faith and devotion that flows out towards Him out of the hearts of the devotees. It is the faith of millions that makes the Lord manifest in that image.

Saguna Worship leads to Jnana

You know, whenever you are worshipping the image of God, you look upon the image as the very manifestation of Divinity. In the first stage of worship,

you all know, we superimpose upon the image our own Atman, and then worship the image as the manifestation of the Atman or God. This is called *Avahan*. After the worship is over, there is what is called *Visarjan*, i.e., we take back the superimposed Atman into ourselves. Gradually, as we go on worshipping with this faith and devotion, we feel that the image is seated in our heart. So the external form of worship is changed into the internal form of worship. This is called *Manasapuja*. It is then that, in our meditation, we behold the image of the Divine within our hearts. It is by the grace of this Divine within us that we get Jnana. Because, as we find Him within ourselves, all the impurities of the mind are washed away and we become absolutely pure. When the mind becomes pure, we know that we are not the body, but the supreme Atman. So the Saguna worship leads to the realisation of the Self. What we have to do, therefore, is to bear in our bosom the image of God and have His name on our tongue. Then our body becomes the temple of God. Thereafter, singing His glories and chanting His name become a blissful experience to us. Then our eyes will also be illumined with the light of God and we can behold God everywhere in all the manifestations. Verily, we behold the entire universe as the one huge image of God. God is in us, is everywhere and is in everything.

So, Saguna form of worship is an essential step for our spiritual evolution. The personal form of God is easy to be concentrated upon, easy of Darshan and easy of having a relationship with. He becomes our

father, mother and master and ourselves His children and servants. In this kind of relationship with Him we are able to increase our devotion to Him from day to day, until His grace comes to us and purifies us, and He accepts us as His true, loving and confiding children. He becomes our sure, unfailing protector and helper. He becomes, as some saints have described Him, our adamant armour. Because, you feel His presence everywhere and are sure that you are protected by Him in every way and in all situations. So God now is, for you, at once personal and impersonal, divine protector, father, mother, friend and helper.

Even after attaining Jnana, even after having His vision everywhere in the universe, the devotee maintains his relationship with God as a personal Being, and always enjoys the bliss of His close proximity, paternal care and benevolent grace.

Chant His Sweet Name

In the early stages, in order to get this protection and have the consciousness of His presence always with us, it is necessary that we should always remember Him, by taking His holy name. You may chant any name of God you hold dear. God's name is sweeter than nectar, because He is supreme bliss. When such a Name is always on our tongue, we shall be tasting nothing but divine nectar. When you go to temples, of course, you feel the presence of God there, because you are before the image of God; but Ramdas appeals to you that even when you are outside the temple, you should keep your mind ever in tune with Him, by

singing to yourself the glorious, all-powerful, sweet and holy name of God. You know Swami Vivekananda was a great devotee of Shiva. Those who were closely associated with him said that he was constantly repeating Shiva, Shiva, Shiva. He taught us that by uttering the name of Shiva, gradually we become the very manifestation of Shiva. This is the height to which the repetition of the Name and worship of God lead you. God is so gracious and kind that He converts His devotees into His own likeness. This supreme state of complete liberation and oneness with Shiva, the impersonal, can be achieved through the worship of Him in your bosom. By His grace the devotee reaches spiritual perfection.

With these words Ramdas closes the speech, after praying again with you all to the Lord of the worlds to shower His grace upon all human beings and awaken them to the consciousness of His existence, and make them His true devotees and thereby bring about unity, harmony, goodwill and peace in the world.

AT THE SINDHI COMMUNITY CENTRE, COLOMBO.
9th December, 1954.

Self-surrender

Dear Friends, — Ramdas is going to talk to you today on self-surrender. You know that the greatest obstacle on the path of the spiritual aspirant is pride. Pride causes the fall of man. We have in the world people who are proud of learning, proud of riches, proud of fame and name. They are attached to these things to such an extent that they go about telling people that they are this and they are that. This kind of conceit and pride is the greatest hindrance in the path of a spiritual aspirant. He should efface himself completely. He must feel that he is nothing and God is everything. In the Bible we have read 'It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven'.

God chooses the humble

Unless we are meek, God will never reveal Himself in our heart. Heart is the place where God resides and not the head. Head is full of conceit, full of intellectual pride. This pride is uppermost when we have forgotten God. Before God we are nothing. So let us humble ourselves before Him and feel that we are nothing and He is everything. Then it is that He manifests Himself in our heart and fills us with divine radiance, peace and joy. You know what was the fate of Ravana. He was ruined because of his pride. Look at Kamsa. He was also similarly ruined. Sisupala,

Duryodhana and Hiranyakasipu also met with the same fate. They brought about their own destruction by pride. Whereas, the names of Vibhishana and Sudama are permanently stamped in the hearts of devotees, who draw inspiration by the very thought of these great souls.

Then again, from the lives of saints, we find that they were not often born in rich families, but in very humble circumstances. God chose to reveal Himself in their hearts because they were very humble and meek. People are proud of so many things. Even a devotee sometimes becomes proud when he can write books about God or talk well about Him or sing His glories. This pride becomes a hindrance to him on the path. So we must be free from all kinds of pride. When we do anything, which the world applauds, we should feel that it is by God's power alone that we are able to do anything at all, and so all the credit goes to Him and not to us. If we feel proud of having done a great thing, we slip down, we are disturbed in our meditation and our spiritual practices end in failure. Whenever we do something great we should feel that God made us do it, and see that pride does not arise in our heart. As soon as pride comes, we should know we have lost contact with God. The head must bend down before we can see God in our heart. In this connection Ramdas is going to tell you a story.

Story of Hiranyakasipu

You all have heard about Hiranyakasipu. He was very proud of his power. He was considering himself

as God. His son Prahlada was a devotee of Hari and was taking His name always. Hiranyakasipu asked his son to give up repeating that Name and take his own name instead. 'I am God', he said to Prahlada, 'Do not repeat the name of Hari. Take my name.' But Prahlada was so devoted to Vishnu that he would not listen to his father. For this Hiranyakasipu persecuted him and gave him no end of trouble. Prahlada bore everything patiently and went on with his devotion to Vishnu.

Hiranyakasipu was very powerful and wanted to fight with and conquer the Devas. Whenever the Devas saw him coming to attack them, they were running away due to fright. Being victorious wherever he went, Hiranyakasipu walked about with his head high and could never bend it before anybody. After defeating all the Devas he went to Vaikuntha to fight with Vishnu. Everyone in Vaikuntha, including Vishnu, fled and hid themselves, with the result that Hiranyakasipu could not find anybody there. Then he searched for Vishnu in all the three worlds and could not spot Him. He returned to his kingdom victorious and more proud of himself than ever.

Narada heard this story. He went to Vishnu after Hiranyakasipu had returned to his place. He saw Vishnu seated on the throne. Narada gave a hearty laugh and asked Vishnu why He ran away and hid himself out of fear. "You did, perhaps, well in running away. Hiranyakasipu could not find you out even after he searched all the three worlds. But where did you hide yourself?", asked Narada. Vishnu said with a

smile, "I was hiding myself in Hiranyakasipu's own heart. He was searching for me in all the three worlds, but could not find me though I was all the time in his heart". Narada asked, "How is it that he could not find you out there?" Vishnu said, "How could he find me in his heart unless he bent his head? If he had done so he would have certainly seen me. He was too proud to bend his head". Vishnu knew for certain that Hiranyakasipu would not bow down his head. So he was safely hidden in Hiranyakasipu's heart. So if you want to see God in your heart, you must bend down before Him, giving up your pride. If you are proud and keep your head high, you will not see God.

This story has a great lesson to teach us. With humility it is that you can find Him and not when you are proud. Pride keeps us away from God. Humility brings us nearer to God. Humility enables us to destroy the ego-sense and the feeling that we are greater, better or higher than others.

Sri Ramakrishna's Humility

Ramdas will give you another instance. It is about Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. He was a humble devotee of Mother Kali. He never posed that he was a great devotee. He was childlike in all his talks, actions and ways of life. Once Keshab Chandra Sen went to see him. He had heard about the fame of Sri Ramakrishna. In the course of his talk, Keshab Chandra Sen said he had recently enacted a religious drama in which he had taken the chief part. Sri

Ramakrishna quietly listened. A disciple of Keshab Chandra Sen said that Keshab played his part very well and everybody applauded him. They were planning to enact another drama. Keshab Chandra Sen jokingly asked Sri Ramakrishna if he would like to take a part in it and if so, in what role. Without a moment's hesitation, Sri Ramakrishna replied, 'I shall take the part of the dust of your feet'.

What was the result of his reply? Sudden stillness and silence. All who were there descended to the level of dust. The men of pride became automatically humble. By humbling themselves, saints humble others. When we reduce ourselves to the dust, we realise the glory of the Spirit within.

Examples of Jnandev and Tukaram

Jnandev was born of very poor parents and when his parents died he even had to go a-begging along with his brothers. They were repulsed from every house and had to suffer a lot of persecution at the hands of the people. Tukaram was a petty shopkeeper, He lost his business and was living on alms given voluntarily. But he was taking God's name day and night. He was engaged only in singing about God and talking about Him. Similarly, Jnandev found solace in constant meditation. They were pure and humble devotees of God. Even today, after hundreds of years, thousands of devotees in Maharashtra dance in ecstasy singing, "Jnandev, Tukaram". These great souls have become immortal. They are worshipped as God. What about the men who were proud of wealth, property,

fame and name? Where are they now? Who remembers their names? Millions of such people simply come and go, Verily, the great souls, who are freed from pride by constantly remembering God, have attained immortality.

If you want to attain this blessed state and wish to leave a permanent stamp on this earth, be a devotee of God. Surrender yourself to Him. Remember God constantly by repeating His holy name. Give up all pride of anything that you have or that you are in the world. Realise God in your heart. Behold Him everywhere. Then you will become a blessing to humanity. Your very name will raise holy emotions in the hearts of people and yield joy and solace to many. Your life will be elevated, enlightened and liberated from ignorance and bondage. Pride is the bane that eats into the vitals of our being. Let us not be proud of anything. Let our life be lived for the service of God. He will surely protect us and guide us in every way. He will lead us towards the supreme goal of life. His protection can come to us only when we are humble.

Lesson of Cardinal Wolsey

You have heard of Cardinal Wolsey. He was a Bishop in England. He was given a lot of wealth and land by king Henry VIII who wanted to get the Bishop's sanction for the seven or eight marriages he had. Such marriages were not permitted by the Church, and the Bishop gave sanction for them because the king gave him wealth and other things. Now, instead of serving God, the Bishop began to serve the king. But

when the king was renouncing the last queen and wanted to marry another, Wolsey could not stand it. He told the king that he was wrong. The king got angry with the Bishop, confiscated all his property and put him in prison where he was given only bread and water. The Bishop keenly felt his miserable state and repented before God, saying, "Had I but served My God with half the zeal I served my king, He would not in mine age have left me naked to mine enemies."

If we serve God, He will protect us always and we shall have no reason for regret at any time. So, let us humble ourselves before the Almighty Lord of the universe and become His servants. Although we have to work in the world, let us feel at heart that we are His servants and He is our master and thus keep the ego-sense away and be free from pride, which is responsible for our unsteady, irregular and difficult progress on the spiritual path. When we sit for meditation, our mind wanders. Even when we try to do good to others, we are not able to do so. What stands in the way is pride. People pride themselves, saying, 'I am so and so, I did this and I did that.' Sometimes people come to the Ashram and say, "Swamiji, I am so busy, I cannot stay longer this time. I shall come again in a week's time." Ramdas would reply, "Many people have told us like that, but they could never come as promised." So, do not think, "I will do this", "I have done that" and so on. Feel and say always, "God willing, I shall do this," and thus free yourself from pride that vitiates your life and creates confusion.

How to cultivate Humility

A man who is humble has the highest virtue. A man who is proud has no virtue at all. When it rains, water does not collect on the top of the hill, but in the low valleys. So, virtues are not found in the person who is proud but in the humble. Humility is the greatest virtue. Humble people are very dear to God. How can we cultivate humility? By contacting saints. Saints are free from pride, free from ego-sense and free from the thought that they are something big. They are humble, pure and childlike. Our nature develops according to the company we keep. If we constantly hsve company of saints, our nature becomes like that of a saint. You know that in some forests there are sandalwood trees. In course of time, other kinds of trees that are near the sandalwood trees turn into sandalwood trees. So, in the constant company of saints, we become like saints. Therefore association with saints is very important. There, we learn how true humility comes to us when we constantly think of the Lord of the universe. In His presence, we are nothing. When we forget Him, our ego asserts itself and pride comes in. When we remember His glory, His greatness, omnipotence and omnipresence, then we feel ourselves very little. We are nothing. So let us constantly remember God and think of His infinite nature, His all-powerful existence. Hitler, where is he gone? What about Mussolini? Where are they all gone? If you remember God constantly, pride will not approach you. The glow-worm goes about at night,

feeling it has bright light. As soon as it dawns, we do not know where the glow-worm is.

Hanuman went to Lanka taking the form of a fly and fooled the demons. Let us therefore feel small and enter the kingdom of heaven, which is the realm of immortal joy and peace, and become one with it.

Let us remember the story of Hiranyakasipu, and not forget it.

AT THE SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, COLOMBO.
12th December, 1954.

To the Children

Inauguration of Bhajan

Beloved Children, — Ramdas is today specially addressing the children. In the first place, Ramdas has been asked to inaugurate today the Bhajan in this hall to be conducted every Sunday from now. First, you may all assemble here in the morning, and after Bhajan for a short while, go to your religious training classes. Ramdas prays to the Almighty that by His grace the congregational Bhajan may be carried on with all success every Sunday. Ramdas fully expects that all of you children will, with whole-hearted devotion, sing together the names of God and create a holy and pure atmosphere which will enable you to attain perfect purity, peace and bliss. You know that God is our father and mother. So we cannot live this life by forgetting Him. By remembering Him constantly, our heart becomes pure and we live the true life which will yield us peace and happiness. By His grace we shall be able to honour our parents, obey our teachers and respect the saints and thus purify our life and make it really successful and happy. Therefore, Ramdas asks you to grow up into real devotees of God, take His name constantly and live your life in a spirit of perfect service to Him.

If devotion comes to us when we are very young, it is easy to think of God constantly and progress

towards Him, and finally realise His presence always with us, and by such presence elevate, enlighten and make our life blessed. You have to take the great examples of children like Prahlada, Dhruva and Nachiketas, who attained God-vision by devoting themselves to Him. God gives us His vision when our hearts are pure. This mental purity is achieved by constant remembrance of God. So Ramdas advises you that, when you assemble here in this hall every Sunday, you must put your heart and soul into the prayers that are held here, and join whole-heartedly in the chanting of God's name. After the Bhajan is over, you will be going to your respective classes where you are given religious instruction, and training in singing of God's glories, and in other devotional practices.

Lastly, Ramdas will tell you that you should live among yourselves in perfect friendliness, love and mutual help. This can be done by engaging yourselves in devotion to God and remembering Him constantly by taking His holy name. Ramdas is asked to repeat the Mantra or the name of God before you, so that all of you can join together and chant the same Name. Ramdas would like to know which Mantra or which Name he should repeat for you. (The children wanted three different Mantras.) As you want three different Mantras, Ramdas will repeat all of them one by one, in which you should also join : "Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram, Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram, Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram ; Om Namah Shivaya, Om Namah Shivaya, Om Namah Shivaya; Muruga, Muruga, Muruga." Ramdas asks you to repeat constantly any

one of the three Mantras which you think suitable for you, and for which you have got love and devotion. It does not mean that by repeating this Mantra you should not repeat other Mantras. All Mantras and Names are of one God. This you should not forget. The one Supreme God has become Rama, Shiva and Muruga. So do not see any difference in these Mantras.

AT THE VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY HALL, COLOMBO.
12th December, 1954.

Under the auspices of the Rama Gana Sabha.

Saguna Upasana

Beloved Forms of Ramdas' Eternal Beloved Ram,—Ramdas is speaking to you today about Saguna Upasana or the approach to God by the worship of His form. In the Bhagavad Gita, it is clearly said that the path of Nirguna Upasana is very difficult. So we have to adopt the worship of some form of God in order to attain Him. We must be devoted to any one form of God, either of Krishna, Rama, Shiva or Vishnu. What we have to do is to be whole-heartedly and in all sincerity devoted to Him. If our devotion for Him is genuine, He gives us His Darshan in the form we worship Him. Then we see Him not only outside us but also within our hearts. Our mind has two defects and they are Vikshepa and Mala—restlessness and impurity. When He is seen within our hearts by His grace, our heart and mind become perfectly pure.

The Role of the Guru

When the mind becomes pure, God within us directs us to a spiritual master. We call him Guru. Verily, Guru is none other than God Himself in that form, because in order to grant us Jnana or Moksha, a Guru is absolutely necessary for us. Moksha can be granted to us only by the Guru. He alone can drive away the darkness from our heart and grant us the

knowledge of the Self or Brahman. When we approach him with a pure heart and mind, he advises us and that advice is stamped on our mind, and gradually works out in such a way as to destroy our ego-sense and make us realise the Self. The process is Sravana, Manana, Nididhyasa and Sakshatkara. Sravana is hearing Guru's advice, Manana is constant reflection over the advice so given, Nididhyasa is to get fixed in the Supreme Truth. By this process, the veil of ignorance or the *avarana* dosha will be destroyed. Now it is that we realise that we are Brahman or the Supreme Self. This is called Sakshatkara or Jnana. This Jnana we get through Saguna Upasana. All the saints in the world, particularly in India, had progressed on the path only after first having recourse to the worship of a divine form of God. You know, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa was a worshipper of Mother Kali. Through the grace of the Mother he got the contact of a Guru, and through the grace of the Guru he got Jnana. This is true of all the saints and sages in India.

Image Worship common to all Religions

So, in the early stages of our progress towards God, the worship of the image of God is essential. This is equally true of all the religions of the world. Christians worship the image of Christ. Buddhists worship the image of Buddha. Jains worship the image of Mahavira. Moslems, though they do not worship any form, have God's name always on their lips. The name of Allah and the form of Allah are not different. We approach

God in three ways. All these three ways amount to worship of His forms. We should not think that an image is His only form. The sound of His name is also His form. And light is also His form. Those who are worshipping light are taking it to be God, and reach God through light. You know, Zoroaster worshipped God as sun and light. Or, you can take God as sound. He is called Nada Brahman. If you simply utter Om or Ram or Shiva, and concentrate your mind upon the sound issuing from the utterance, your mind will get merged in the sound and, transcending the relative, will reach the absolute. So it is necessary, in order to rise to the height of the Advaitic realisation, that we should hold on to some form, sound or light of God. Therefore it is found that in all houses, where people are religiously inclined, there is either an image or picture of God, before which they sit, worship and sing His names and glories.

Sing God's Glories

What is it which pleases God most? It pleases Him most when we sing about Him with all love and devotion. The sound of God's name is very sweet. When we sing with all love, we find that our heart is filled with inexpressible joy and peace, and before our eyes stands the image of the Divine. In this stage we are lifted to a height where we enjoy supreme ecstasy. You know the famous and world-renowned Devarishi Narada. He was singing God's name continuously and feeling himself to be ever in Vaikuntha before Lord Vishnu. Prahlada was singing the name of Narayana

and was feeling His presence always with him. He had the vision of Vishnu. So also you will find so many other devotees in India like Tyagaraja, Tukaram, Ekanath, Jnandev, Tulsidas, Kabir, Guru Nanak, the Alwar saints, etc. All of them had Saguna Upasana and were singing in beautiful poetic language and enthralling music the glories of the Divine, and were able to capture the heart of God and make Him grant them His Darshan. God has gifted us with the musical talent. We must use it only for singing His glory and praising Him. God says, "I am not available easily to Yogis, Tapaswins or Jnanis, but I dance before those devotees of mine who sing of my glories with all love and devotion." Therefore we must put our heart and soul in it when we sing the glories of God. By such devotion our life must mingle and become one with the Divine existence and life.

Virat Darshan

We must not only be blessed with Saguna Darshan, but we must also have His Virat Darshan, that vision which he granted to Arjuna during the Mahabharata war in Kurukshetra. Arjuna saw the whole universe as one gigantic image of the Lord. Likewise we have to see every form, every being and everything in the universe as the expression and the embodiment of God. Saguna Upasana leads us to a Guru, and the Guru's compassion and grace leads us to this universal vision which baffles all description. Then we shall have simultaneously all the four kinds of Moksha described in the Shastras, namely, Sayujya, Samipya, Salokya

and Sarupya. All these Mokshas are not to be enjoyed separately but together at the same time. We are one with God, we are near God, we are in the same place as God and we have the same likeness as God. This is the supreme goal which this human life must reach, and then we shall become perfect in spiritual attainment, spiritual experience and realisation.

AT THE HINDU COLLEGE, BAMBALAPITIYA, COLOMBO.
13th December, 1954.

"Saraswati Hall" Opening Function

Beloved Friends—Declaring this beautiful and spacious hall open, Mother Krishnabai and Ramdas, in the first place, invoke the choicest blessings of the Lord so that this hall may be instrumental in giving education to the youngsters who badly need such a hall for their education. We have been asked to give a name to this hall. May this hall be called from this time onwards, "Saraswati Hall". It is in the fitness of things that this hall should be called by that name, as Saraswati is the Goddess of Learning, and it is from Her that we have to draw inspiration in our educational career. Through Her grace alone we shall be able to understand things properly and to learn the arts and sciences in the proper spirit and grow into useful citizens of India, Ceylon and all the world. Ramdas, in this connection, cannot forget to mention the munificent donation made by the friend, who was responsible for the construction of this beautiful hall.

Purpose of Education

You know that there are, as it is said by our ancient teachers and saints, three kinds of gifts. One is the gift of devotion, the second is of education and the third of food. Education is an important thing in the evolution of human life. Without education we cannot grow up in the right way so as to regulate our lives

and make ourselves useful to others. Without culture we cannot prove ourselves to be useful to our fellow-beings. We should expect institutions like this to give education not only for the advancement of the intellect but also for the expansion of the heart. It is not merely that we should hold degrees by passing examinations, but we should also cultivate the virtues of the heart so that we can have culture both intellectually and emotionally. Our heart must have compassion, forgiveness and kindness towards all beings in the world. Our intellect must be used in order to fulfil the aims which the heart has set before us. Heart and mind should be controlled by a higher Power so that they can work harmoniously. That power is God. We cannot forget Him. If we forget Him there will be a clash between the heart and the intellect, and our life will be ill-regulated and confused. Therefore we must look up to that higher Power to guide us so that He can illumine our intellect and fill our heart with holy emotions, and our life may be completely spiritualised in all fields of action.

Ramdas' Advice to Students

The Bhagavad Gita has taught us that we are not to give up actions but to divinise our actions. This is possible only when we draw inspiration from God in all that we do. So we must tune ourselves with God, who is responsible for all this vast universe before us. Education must be received in order to make our lives useful for our fellow-beings, by removing from our minds selfish tendencies which are responsible for confusion and discord in our life. So, of all the gifts,

the greatest gift is that of devotion. We must have, first, belief in God. We must pray to Him daily and draw inspiration from Him. Then we should learn our lessons, so that by learning we may make ourselves really useful and helpful to others. Our selfishness must go. Through devotion and education we can widen our vision. Education itself widens our understanding and gives us the power to utilise the God-given gifts for the service of others. This is the prime purpose with which we are born as human beings. We must get education and engage ourselves in spiritual and devotional practices for the service of others. This must be the motto of our life.

You, perhaps, do not expect Ramdas to make a long speech because the other day, when he came to this very hall, he had made a long speech on the Bhagavad Gita which is the quintessence of Hinduism. So Ramdas requests you to read this scripture everyday. Even if it is only one Sloka, keep up the practice without a break and try to live your life according to the teachings of that wonderful scripture. Once again Ramdas prays to the Almighty Lord to shower His blessings upon this most useful institution which gives education not only to the youngsters of the Hindu community but also to the other communities, whenever it is possible to admit them and extend to them the same privileges which the Hindu children enjoy. This itself shows that it is universal in its outlook and not sectarian. If we all mingle together in this spirit, loving and helping each other, we shall have fulfilled the purpose of this human life, which is a rare gift God has given us.

AT THE SINDHI COMMUNITY CENTRE, COLOMBO.
14th December, 1954.

Satsang and Satnam

Beloved Friends,—On the eve of our departure for Jaffna, this Bhajan is held here in this hall, and on this occasion Ramdas does not propose to make a long speech. He has been all these days, during his stay in Colombo, emphasising the need for everyone of us to remember God constantly, because by the remembrance of God we realise His presence within us. This is the easiest way to attain Him. Remembrance leads us to a consciousness of His existence within us. For remembering Him there is no easier way than the constant chanting or repetition of God's name, which is all-powerful and sweet. Ramdas, for himself, found that the repetition of the Name was the easiest method by which the waves of the mind could be stilled. When the mind is still, all the thoughts disappear and we realise that we are not the body or the senses but the eternal, all-pervading Spirit. We call this spirit 'God', and His nature is bliss and peace. Be conscious of Him as the indwelling Reality and knowing that Reality as yourself, attain immortality. This is the chief aim of human life.

If we ignore this quest and get entangled in this external show, we shall be subject to cares, anxieties, fears and worries. This we see from our own experience. This state of things we should avoid and our quest should be to find the Eternal life, attaining which alone

we can come by real peace and joy. Now Ramdas will give the names of some of the great sages and saints of India who realised God by chanting the Divine name. In the first place, Ramdas must make mention of the name of Guru Nanak Dev who, we know, is worshipped upstairs. Guru Granth Sahib is a source of inspiration to millions in India, and mostly in Northern India. Guru Nanak Dev says that there are only two ways of approach to the Divine. If you are sincere in your quest of God, you should have Satsang and Satnam. If you have constantly on your tongue the name of God, and you court the company of saints, then your march towards God is made easy. You need not have recourse to any other Sadhana. Constant remembrance of God will make you aware of His presence within you and contact of saints will grant you this remembrance. We are awakened to the awareness of the Reality, in the company of saints. Without their grace and influence we are nowhere on the spiritual path.

God's Name—the Mainstay

A man who thinks that he can attain God without contacting a saint. cannot have his wish fulfilled. This is very clear from the lives of all saints and sages. What the saints and sages, whose names Ramdas is going to mention, did in the first place was that they contacted saints and received from them initiation of the name of God and they started chanting that name, looking upon the person who initiated them as their spiritual master and guide. In the ancient days, according to the Puranas, we had great devotees like

Prahlada, Narada and Draupadi; later on Namdev, Tulsidas, Tukaram, Gauranga, Kabir and Nandanar. All these saints held God's name as the chief means for the concentration, purification and elevation of the mind and for the ultimate realisation of God.

Draupadi

Draupadi was an ardent devotee of Krishna. First of all, it is absolutely necessary, as Draupadi and all others have done, that we should give our heart to God and then take His name. Then we are completely entitled to the protection of God in all situations.

We are repeating His name with our mind engaged in worldly thoughts and desires, and do not depend entirely upon God or love Him above everything else in the world. As a result of this, we do not get as much help and support from Him as we expect. You know that when Draupadi was in great trouble, she called on Krishna to come to her rescue, but Krishna did not come as she was trying also to protect herself. But when she gave up her own effort to defend herself and entirely depended upon Krishna and called on Him, He at once saved her.

Lord Gauranga

Then again we find Gauranga and Tukaram, who were all votaries of the Divine name. They were ceaselessly repeating God's name and they had visions and Divine experiences. Gauranga was simply mad of the Divine name. He was dancing in ecstasy. He electrified the hearts of those who came in contact with him and made them also chant God's name. When

he was going from village to village, people from those places joined him in the chorus of the Divine name. Really, when we repeat God's name and get the joy resulting from it, we cannot sometimes contain ourselves. We stand up and dance in ecstasy. When a child gets a new toy what does it do? It dances in joy. When joy runs in your veins and takes possession of every part of your body, you dance in ecstasy.

Saint Kabir

Kabir was another votary of God's name. How did he get God's name? He was a Muslim by birth. He wanted to repeat God's name, but nobody would give him initiation. He went to Swami Ramanand, a famous saint of Banaras, and prayed to him to give him the name of God, but the Swami said he could not be initiated because he was a Muslim. It was usual for Swami Ramanand to go to the Ganges for his bath early in the morning, even when there was no sufficient light, and he had to step down the ghat. Kabir went and laid himself on one of the steps of the ghat, at the very place where Swami Ramanand used to take his bath. The Swami did not see Kabir lying down. So he placed his foot on the back of Kabir and suddenly felt that somebody was lying down there and said "Ram, Ram." As soon as Kabir heard this Name, he got up and said his work was over, because he felt he had got the initiation. From that time he started repeating the Name and got the highest spiritual experiences. He had the vision of Divinity in all forms, in all aspects, and in all ways. That means he had the all-comprehensive and all-inclusive realisation of God,

Maharishi Valmiki

You know, Valmiki was a robber. By the grace of Narada who gave him Ram Mantra, he was not only saved from evil-doing but was also raised to the status of a Maharishi. He was venerated all over the world. Ajamila repeated God's name once at the time of his death. The result was that by the power of the Name he was taken to heaven. Tulsidas is never tired of praising the power of the Name in the Ramayana. If you read here and there the great praises he gives to the power of the Name, you will be simply charmed.

Saint Namdev

Namdev and another great Yogi of the time went together on a pilgrimage. On the way both felt thirsty. They found a well which was very deep and had only a small quantity of water at the bottom. They could not get at the water. The Yogi converted himself into a small sparrow, went inside the well, drank water and came out. But Namdev had no such powers. But he had unshakable faith in God, and His name was always on his lips. He turned towards Pandharpur, where his Ishta was residing in the temple, and cried out: 'Oh Vithal, I am thirsty. I want water." Then a miracle happened and the water at the bottom of the well came up and overflowed. He not only drank the water, but could also take a bath in it. He did not have to become a sparrow.

Saint Nandanar

Nandanar was a Pariah by caste. He repeated the name of Nataraja before seeing or knowing anything

about Him. Repeating His name, he was dancing in ecstasy. Ultimately God took him to Chidambaram and there he disappeared in the flash of light that came from God in the temple. This status was achieved by the Pariah saint by the simple chanting of the name of God. You know, of course, about Narada. Day and night he was singing God's name, and was immersed in continuous joy and ecstasy.

God is at once Master and Servant

Ramdas can multiply instances like this, because in our Puranas we have the lives of many saints. Therein we find that the Divine name saved people not only from worldly difficulties and dangers, but also raised them to the highest spiritual eminence, by which they realised their oneness with God not only in the personal form but also in the impersonal all-pervading form. Even after realising God in all these aspects, they were able to feel constantly the fellowship of God with them. God used to look after them tenderly in so many ways. A devotee is under the protection and care of God. He is looked upon by the devotee as his Master, but He virtually becomes the servant of His devotees. He looks after them like the mother looking after her child. This is Ramdas' experience all these years. God has been looking after him and attending on him like a mother. This is all due to Ramdas' repeating His name. His name is wonderful in its potency, wonderful in its power. It can transform a mortal into an immortal and raise him to the highest spiritual eminence. It can convert him entirely into an

image of God. So Ramdas' last word on this occasion, before he leaves Colombo, is that you should all make it a point to remember God everyday by chanting His holy name and keep your mind perfectly serene and calm and feel His presence in your hearts.

AT THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VAITHEESWARA VIDYALAYAM, JAFFNA.

15th December, 1954.

The Goal of Human Life

Beloved Devotees of God,—Ramdas introduces himself to you as an humble servant and confiding child of God. In August last God willed that this child should leave India on a world tour. The object of the tour is to propagate the ideal of universal love and service. In the course of the tour he came in contact with many spiritual luminaries in different parts of the world, and also met thousands of spiritual aspirants. God also gave him opportunities to address over one hundred gatherings. Among the great saintly souls he met on this tour were Christians—both Protestants and Roman Catholics — Hindus, Buddhists, Sufis, and illumined personalities belonging to new spiritual universalist movements. He delivered speeches and discourses in Hindu spiritual centres, Unitarian churches, Fellowship chapels, Buddhist associations, temples and other centres in different parts of Europe, America, Japan, Hongkong and Singapore. Wherever he went and whenever he was able to talk with friends before large audiences, he found a peculiar joy of communion with all of them and saw there was a great spiritual awakening among them.

Avatars and Prophets—Their Mission

In the state of confusion and discord at present prevailing in the world — which we know is due

to want of faith in the all-pervading God, who controls the destinies of humanity — what we have to do is to practise universal love and service. Individual liberation and world liberation depend upon our tuning our life with the universal Spirit which we call Reality, Truth or God. It is said in the Bhagavad Gita, "Whenever Adharma or unrighteousness prevails, I come from age to age to establish righteousness and destroy unrighteousness". To fulfil these great and assuring words, the Lord has come down on the earth, having assumed human forms from time to time, for the redemption of mankind, whenever there was unrighteousness and chaos in the world. When people were resorting to all sorts of evil practices in the name of religion, Lord Buddha came to put a stop to such practices and to establish true religion by awakening and enlightening people in India and abroad. We have also the great Avatars, Rama and Krishna, who came to destroy evil and establish righteousness. Mohammed's advent was to found a brotherhood amongst warring tribes and bring peace and harmony amongst them. Similarly, in Palestine, when the people were victims of a false religion, and exploitation and tyranny were rampant, Jesus came in order to remove these evils, to create true faith in God and to preach love and service.

Ramdas will, in this connection, tell you the predominant features in the realisation of these great religious leaders of the world; for, each one stands for a particular kind of realisation which is a shining example to us, by following which we can gain immensely. Buddha taught us that we should rise above all

desires, mundane ambitions and aspirations and go deep down within ourselves to find supreme peace. This attainment of peace, he called Nirvana or emancipation. Ramdas takes this as the attainment of Jnana. In the Bhagavad Gita we see, in the eleventh chapter, how Lord Krishna gave His Vishwarupa Darshan to Arjuna. Here the Lord teaches us that we have to behold the whole universe as the expression or manifestation of the Divine. Then, coming to Jesus, we see he taught us how one should love all beings as oneself. Then again, Mohammed would have us surrender ourselves completely to God's will and realise that by His will and power alone everything happens in this world. These great spiritual Teachers and Prophets came in centuries gone by. But even in our own times we have had great spiritual Masters. We have Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Sri Aurobindo, Ramana Maharshi and others. These radiant personalities are our great guides. They have brought us the message of unity of all religions and have told us that the goal of human life is the attainment of spiritual perfection by the vision of God as the all-inclusive and all-transcendent Supreme Being.

What we should do

Now what is the part we have to play in this world? We should turn our vision inward and realise the all-pervading, static, calm and silent Spirit which we call Atman, Purusha, Shiva or Brahman. There are various ways of approach to this state of complete liberation from the thraldom of desires and from the darkness of

ignorance. But Ramdas, from his own experience, can tell you that the easiest method by which he was able to still the mind and become aware of that supreme Truth within himself and everywhere about him, was the repetition or chanting of God's name—holy, all-powerful and sweet. By taking God's name you establish in your mind a remembrance of the Divinity within you until at last you become conscious of the Truth within you, which makes you aware that you are not the body made up of the five elements and a bundle of sensations, but the infinite, eternal, all-pervading Truth. This inner experience develops into the outer vision by which you behold all beings and creatures in the universe as manifestations of God. In this beatific vision, all differences dissolve — differences, as we find in the world, based upon caste, colour, race and nationality. Now it is that you have realised the truth of the Mahavakya or the great message of our Rishis: Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma—"Verily the whole universe is Brahman."

Our sense of separation from God and our fellow-beings is responsible for our bondage. If we are truly aspiring for the realisation of God, we must gradually dissolve all apparent differences and realise unity. Verily, God is the parent of all human beings. God is the father and mother of us all and we are His or Her children. We must not forget this. Then our relation with each other will be one of mutual love, and there will be no hatred or discord. All the great spiritual Teachers tell us the same truth, lead us to the same goal. They teach us how to live in harmony and peace.

Universal love and service form the only way for freeing the individual and the world from discord.

The Four Faiths in Japan

Ramdas is going to tell you now about what he heard from a great Buddhist in Japan. He said, in Japan, there are four spiritual faiths. They are Shintoism, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. The quintessence of these faiths is expressed in four inspiring words. Shintoism stands for reverence for all life. Confucianism stands for enlightenment, which makes one know that everywhere the same Truth pervades. Taoism stands for perfect purity by which alone we can fill our heart with love for all beings in the world. Buddhism stands for tranquillity which is gained through the realisation of the Self and by complete extinction of all desires in us. These four words are really inspiring.

Ramdas has spoken to you these words in order to awaken you to the consciousness of your real life and existence. In order to dwell in this consciousness, you should think always not in terms of the individual, but in terms of the universal. Do all things only for the sake of God. If you do this, gradually your ego-sense will disappear and you will realise that you are the universal Spirit—changeless, eternal and infinite, This is the goal which you have to achieve.

Ramdas prays to God Almighty to shower His blessings upon all in the world so that He may awaken them to the consciousness of their real Self and life, and enable them to live together in perfect harmony and goodwill.

AT THE WOMEN'S COLLEGE, JAFFNA.
16th December, 1954.

Divine Parent within Us

Beloved Children of God,—Ramdas never expected he would have to speak to you today, but it has been put down in your programme that he should speak a few words. Ramdas addresses you as children of God, because we are all His children and the purpose of our life is to find Him and recognise Him as our Divine father and mother. He is all-pervading, and as the great Avatar, Lord Krishna, has told us, He is seated in the hearts of everyone of us. If we pray to Him, let us pray to Him as dwelling within us, so that we can feel, through prayer, His close proximity. If we think that He is far away from us, we do not derive any benefit of our communion with Him. If we feel that He is dwelling within us, then this fact of nearness to Him enables us to lift our hearts up to Him and fill ourselves with His light, power, love and glory. Therefore, Ramdas requests you all not to think of God as one far away from you. He is very near you, and in that spirit you must pray to Him, sing of Him, and take His holy name. You know that by taking the holy name of God, we bring into our mind His remembrance, which makes us feel conscious of His presence, because when we forget Him we do not know that we are near Him and He is near us.

Through remembrance it is that we feel His presence with us. When a child misses its mother it feels very

unhappy. But in the presence of the mother it feels happy. So also in the remembrance of the Divine we must surely feel happy and peaceful. To keep up a continuous remembrance of God is to feel His presence always with us. God is at once our father and mother. As mother, He is the Divine power active in the universe and manifest as all beings and creatures. As father, He is the all-pervading, static and calm Spirit. So He is called at once Shiva and Shakti. Shakti is the mother aspect and Shiva is the father aspect, both together forming the supreme Godhead, to whom we have to surrender ourselves by continuous remembrance and prayer.

Ramdas is not going to make a very long speech. He will now close his speech by asking you to repeat God's name as he is doing it : "Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram." Ramdas prays to God Almighty to shower His choicest blessings upon you all and give you one-pointed devotion to Him, and through such devotion enable you to realise Him in your own hearts and behold Him in the entire universe as all beings, creatures and things. May He bless you !

AT THE CIVIL HOSPITAL, KANKESANTURAI.
16th December, 1954.

God-remembrance ensures Security

Beloved Embodiments of the Divine,—Ramdas has come to you today to speak about God. God is our father and mother. If we are to feel that He is ever protecting us, it is necessary for us to remember Him constantly. The moment we forget Him we lose contact with Him, and the result is that we feel like children in the absence of their mother. Therefore, to be assured that there is a power over us who protects, guides and prompts us from time to time and from moment to moment, we must remember God constantly. We should not forget the fact that by constant remembrance of God alone we can have His protection. All our difficulties, troubles, worries and anxieties are transitory, and disappear the moment we become conscious that God is protecting us. In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna has said :

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥

"To those who worship Me alone thinking of no other, to such devotees who are ever united with Me in contemplation, I bring full security, fulfilling all their wants and taking care of them." In this world of change, we meet with various vicissitudes of life, both pleasant and unpleasant. The body is stricken with diseases and the mind filled with worries. In this state of unhappiness, turmoil and misery, there is only one

way and that is to take refuge in God. It is God alone who can remove our difficulties and bring us health, peace and prosperity.

Ramdas is very glad to find himself in this hospital in which selfless service is rendered to those who are suffering from T.B. and other diseases. Ramdas is sure that those who are responsible for the treatment, the doctors and the nurses, are doing their duties with all love and devotion. Their duties are those which God has enjoined upon them. They must not forget that they are merely instruments in the hands of God. If they remember this always, God's power will act through them for bringing relief to the sufferers. God is the great healer. We are only vehicles through whom His power works for the good of others. The patients must have implicit faith and trust in God. The easiest way by which they can remember God and feel His protection is through the constant repetition of God's name. By the repetition of the Name they can be sure that they will both physically and spiritually evolve to the supreme goal of liberation. This is definitely the easiest way. The Name will grant you the assurance within that you are under God's guidance and protection.

Do not think that you can worship God only by sitting in one place. You can think of Him by repeating His name even when you work with hands and feet. When your hands are working, you can mentally repeat the holy Name; your work then will be holy and pleasant. Therefore we are told that whenever we give, receive, or do any other work, we must have our

thoughts on God. Then all the work that we do will become divine in nature. In that state God's protection will always be with us. So Ramdas exhorts you all, not only the patients, doctors and nurses, but all those who are assembled here, that you should try to keep the thought of God in your mind always and be active in the world. That activity should be nothing but the service of God in humanity. In conclusion, Ramdas invokes Divine blessings upon you all so that the awakening within you of the consciousness of God may always remain with you and you may do all actions in a spirit of spontaneous service to humanity.

AT THE PERUMAL KOIL, JAFFNA.
16th December, 1954.

Bhakti

You are all the very manifestations of God, and as inspired by you, Ramdas is speaking to you today on Bhakti or devotion.

Devarishi Narada, in his Bhakti Sutras, has defined Bhakti as the intense love which we bear to God. What are the qualities of a devotee of God? In the first place, he remembers God at all times. God's name will always be on his lips As he chants the name of God, his mind gets more and more absorbed in Him and detached from worldly ambitions and desires, and by constant practice he gets the vision of God, finds union with God and ultimately realises God's presence within himself. In the heart he sees the very image of the Divine. The devotee thereafter beholds God in all beings and creatures. This great achievement is possible only in human life. After innumerable births of various kinds we have come to this precious human life. Indeed human life is a rare gift of God. The object of human life is only to realise God.

Right Use of Life

All human beings, all creatures in the universe, are striving for happiness. But what are they doing? They are trying to find happiness in the objects of the senses. But from experience they come to know that no lasting

happiness can ever be had from the objects of the senses, which only cause frustration, pain, sorrow, failure and disappointment of all kinds. If our life is utilised only for the enjoyments of the pleasures of the senses, we are no better than animals. We have been given by God the power of understanding and discrimination, so that we may do things that will contribute towards our real happiness. God has given us all these powers which are not found in the animals. These are to be used only for the realisation of God through utter devotion to Him. Real happiness lies in realising God. God is *Satchidananda*, which means absolute existence, consciousness and bliss. By seeing Him and realising Him alone we can get peace and bliss. Continuous remembrance of God is the only way to realise Him.

Image Worship

Great saints all over the world have taught us the way to realise God. They started with the lowest form of worship of God. We have found that, at first, many devotees worship some particular form of God in images made of metal, stone or wood. The devotee sees Divinity in those forms. You know, God dwells everywhere. But the devotee sees God in that particular object of worship. There is nothing wrong or unnatural for the devotee to worship an image, looking upon it as the very form of God. When with one-pointed devotion you worship the image, you will find gradually that the form takes its seat in your heart and fills it so completely that you will have no other thought and no

other activity than those concerned with Him and for His sake. Your whole life will be one of sacrifice and dedication to Him and will flow out in service to Him. And you will be filled with rare bliss and peace. All the low desires belonging to the flesh disappear completely. Your nature will develop into that of a child and become so pure, innocent, free, cheerful and spontaneous. In such a state God becomes your father and mother. You cannot miss Him for a single moment. Wherever you turn you see Him and find Him. Inside and out there is for you nothing but one God pervading. This is the supreme achievement for which alone this human life is granted to us. This requires one-pointed devotion for God and the resultant Vairagya or dispassion for the ephemeral things of the world.

Devotion—Gift of Saints

This is not so easy as we imagine, but it becomes very easy when we get the grace of saints. Therefore the great sages and saints in all parts of the world tell us that the first thing we have to do on the spiritual path is to contact saints. It is the saint who brings us in contact with God. It is he who creates devotion in our hearts. He gives us the power of repeating the glorious name of God. By the contact of saints and by serving them we get their grace, and by their grace our heart is illumined with the bliss, love and light of God. It was said of Kabir, a great devotee of Northern India, that he got initiation of Ram Mantra from a Hindu saint. After repeating the Mantra with all love and devotion, he got the Darshan of Rama. He saw before

him both the forms of Rama and his Guru. Then he was thinking within himself, before whom he should prostrate first. He fell at the feet of his Guru because it was by the grace of the Guru that he had the Darshan of Rama. So, by the grace of a saint alone our eyes will be opened and we shall be able to see God. So long as we do not see God, we are as good as blind. Therefore we must get the grace of saints and have our eyes opened to the awareness, knowledge and Darshan of God.

What the Name can do

Repetition of God's name constantly will purify our minds and raise us to a level in which we realise that we are always in the presence of God. God's name is like a boat because, when we take the Name, it takes us across the sea of life. It is also compared to a bridge that takes us to the two sides of a river, because it gives us Darshan of both the Nirguna and the Saguna. A saint in India says that God's name is like a lamp on the doorstep which gives light inside the room as well as outside the room. So also when we keep the Name on our lips, it gives us Darshan of God inside as well as outside. Unless we see God within and without, we cannot have that supreme bliss and peace which all aim at, thirst for and hunger for.

Ramdas asks you to sit for a short while and with all love and devotion take His name. You will find that the Name will grant you, for that moment at least, real peace and bliss. You know, when you were singing God's name here in chorus, what peace and

joy you felt inwardly. You can take God's name anywhere and everywhere, while walking, sitting, travelling, on all occasions and at all times. If you have got any adoration for any form of God, let that form dwell in your heart and let the Name chanted by your tongue constantly ring in your ears. In this way you will find there will be no room for any other thought to come and disturb you. You will be doing all things in a calm, serene and cheerful spirit, and ultimately you will find that you are merged in God and that you are doing everything by His will, His power, and His inspiration.

Saint Janibai

It is not that you should give up the daily duties that are allotted to you. But you must do all your work in the consciousness or remembrance of God. Kabir was a weaver. He was repeating God's name and at the same time weaving cloth on the loom. He was saying that the cloth was woven not by him but by Rama. There was a lady in Maharashtra whose name was Janibai. She was always repeating Vithal's name. When she was grinding corn she was feeling that it was Vithal who was doing the work of grinding and not she. When your mind is in tune with God, through the repetition of the Name, whatever is done is not done by you but by God through you. So you can have your being in God and still be acting in the world. When you are doing work with your hand, your mind may be engaged in the thought of God. Instead of wasting your time in useless talk and unnecessary

activities, you should keep His name on your tongue and do your work quietly in a spirit of dedication to Him.

We have got four defects of the tongue. One is that we are talking aimlessly, wasting our time. We are slandering others or talking ill of others. We are using the tongue for scolding and abusing others. We use the tongue for telling lies also. If you have God's name always on your tongue, you can never have these defects. You will only talk when necessary and that too in a sweet and gentle way. Consequently your mind will be calm and serene and your heart will be filled with love for all beings. You will be patient, kind, loving and forbearing. When you develop these virtues, naturally your mind becomes peaceful.

Power of the Name

Ramdas has seen many people, who were given to violent passions and all kinds of evil doings, freed from them by the simple repetition of God's name. Such is the power of God's name. God and His name are not different. God is with form and without form. He can be realised through the worship of either the name or the form. A devotee goes to the length of saying, "I have got Your name, Oh God, and I do not care for Your form." Another devotee says, "Oh God, by the power of Your name I can convert the world which is full of misery into a place full of joy." Yet another devotee says, "If You put me in hell, Oh God, I will throw into it one drop of bliss which I have gained by repeating Your name, and convert hell into heaven."

So we should not find fault with anybody in the world. The fault is ours in not repeating the Name and tuning ourselves with God. Even in these days there are saints and sages all over the world who are perfectly happy and peaceful, because they have no enemies in in the world and they see everywhere only the Divine, and their love goes out to all alike. In this state they enjoy perfect peace and bliss. These are the real children of God. Their contact elevates, illumines and saves those who come in contact with them. The Name saves you and enables you to save others. You light the lamp and enable others to light their lamps from your lamp. The purpose of life is to attain this immortal happiness yourself and share it with others who are in a miserable condition. So long as you have not achieved this happiness, you will be a source of misery to yourself and others. Therefore Ramdas, as inspired by you all, tells you that there is no easier way to commune with God, to realise God, and attain immortal bliss and peace than the chanting, repeating and constant invocation of the Divine name.

AT THE TIRUNELVELI YOUNG MEN'S HINDU ASSOCIATION, JAFFNA.

17th December, 1954.

True Devotion

Beloved Friends,—Ramdas is speaking to you about true devotion to God. There are various kinds of devotional practices prevailing in this world. But true devotion consists in devoting oneself only to God to realise Him, because by God-realisation alone one attains real happiness. True devotion therefore consists in aspiring to see Him, to feel His presence always. God is eternal peace and bliss. To see Him and experience Him is to have immortal bliss and peace. So our quest will be fulfilled only by realising God. By devoting ourselves to God in a spirit of dedication to Him, we experience joy from the very start and not at a distant date. Remembrance of God, out of pure devotion to Him, gives us at once peace and joy. We know that for remembering God the easiest way is to repeat His holy name. The moment we take His name with all love and devotion, we experience immediate bliss. By the power of the Name, the restlessness of the mind stops and the mind is purified and illumined with the light, love and joy of God. A great saint has said that he who has got God's name always on his lips is a Jivanmukta, because continuous remembrance of God eliminates the ego-sense and brings him to the realisation of his immortal, changeless Self. Name is a link between the devotee and God. It brings the

devotee face to face with God and enables him to realise ultimately his oneness with Him.

Sign of a True Devotee

Therefore the sign of a true devotee of God is that he will always try to maintain a steady and continuous remembrance of God. He will always have God's name on his lips. In his active life he will be dealing with his fellow-beings with love, affection, forgiveness, patience and kindness. His heart will be free from lust, greed, wrath and other evils, and his eyes will be illumined with the light of God and behold only God everywhere. When he beholds God everywhere, he will be happy and peaceful every minute, because he will have transcended duality and diversity and will ever dwell in unity and oneness. Now he fully realises and experiences the principle of the Hindu Shastras that he, God and universe are one. In the attainment of this supreme illumination, his goal in life is fulfilled.

Ramdas' Advice

We must keep this goal in view and live our life accordingly. We must have purity in thought, word and deed, because purity is an essential condition for this supreme realisation. You know that purity in word and deed depends upon the purity of the mind. Mind can be pure only when it is filled with the thought of God, because God is absolute purity. God-thought will ever be in our mind only if we repeat His name constantly. So God's name is the one plank to which we have to cling so that we may not sink in the

sea of life. This plank will take us across the sea of life to the absolute.

From Ramdas' own experience he tells you that the Divine name will grant you the highest spiritual experience and perfection. Therefore he advises you to take the holy name of God and have it on your tongue at all times of the day, whenever you are free and whenever you are doing anything with your hands or feet. In the Bhagavad Gita it is said that, of all the Yajnas, Japa Yajna is the highest and the best. Japa Yajna consists in having God's name always on our lips and in our mind. By ceaseless repetition the Name will get fixed in the mind, and the mind will then automatically repeat the Name. As we go on with such mental repetition, all the impurities of the mind will be washed away and it will become still. When the mind becomes pure and still, we shall have the vision of the Divine within us. When we have found the Divine within, we behold Him everywhere without. So Ramdas' advice to you again is to take the holy name of God always.

AT THE TOWN HALL, JAFFNA.
17th December, 1954.

Under the auspices of the Hindu Sanmarga Sangham.

God-Realisation

Beloved Friends,—Ramdas is going to speak to you today on God-realisation. To realise God is the aim of human life. What do we get by having the vision or realisation of God? All of us are striving to attain perfect peace and happiness. This endeavour will meet with success only when we unite our life with God and realise Him in us and everywhere about us. Now, what is the way of approach to God? All of you know very well that the path of devotion is the easiest. When we, through devotion to God, adore Him and remember Him constantly, our hearts will become pure. God reveals Himself in the heart which is pure.

Message of Spiritual Masters

All the great spiritual masters of the world are telling us, with one voice, that absolute purity of heart is essential for God-realisation. Lord Buddha wants us to be perfectly pure in thought, word and deed, in order to release ourselves from the bondage of ignorance and attain eternal peace and joy. Jesus Christ has said categorically in the Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." Lord Krishna, in the Bhagavad Gita, says, "I am always residing in the hearts of My devotees." Prophet Mohammed has said, "He who takes the name of

Allah constantly and submits to His will, will always have Allah with him." We do not see any difference in the teachings of these great masters. Their object in teaching these principles was to make us live together in perfect friendliness, harmony and peace. These teachers came into the world at different times, when there was strife and disorder of all kinds. Therefore their message to the world was peace and harmony.

Solution to World Tangle

At the present moment, humanity is on trial. There is so much discord, dissension and unrest in the world. So it behoves everyone of us to unite together as one humanity, one world-family, one world-brotherhood, looking upon God as our common father and mother. This universal consciousness can dawn on us only when we shed all the lower impulses and desires that are lurking within. We should, in the first place, see that we are true devotees of God. We must allow His power to work in us for the good of humanity. This will be possible only when we surrender ourselves to Him. God is not far away from us. The moment we surrender ourselves to Him and give up the ego-sense, He takes possession of us and uses this human body for His service in humanity. When His love, power and joy reveal themselves in us, we shall be His true instruments for the good of the world. We shall be able to look upon humanity as one unit. The differences such as caste, creed, colour, religion and nationality will disappear in this supreme vision, because it is one God, one Spirit, who pervades every-

where and dwells in the hearts of all beings and creatures. The supreme Lord of the universe does not belong to any caste, creed, religion or country. He is our universal father and mother. As such, we have no reason to quarrel amongst ourselves on any score; on the other hand, we have every reason to love each other and live in perfect amity and friendliness.

So, when we become devotees of God, we must be devoted to such a God. the universal God. All the great teachers of the world, who came from time to time for the uplift of the world, have come from the same God. Their aim and object in coming was to establish peace, harmony and goodwill in the world. This they did by awakening within us the consciousness of God. They pointed out to us the path of righteousness and truth. We are asked to give up all our lower desires and cultivate love, kindness and compassion towards all beings. A lover of God is surely a lover of humanity. This humble servant, Ramdas, who is sitting before you, has today become the mouthpiece of these great souls. Ramdas feels certain that these words of his will go deep down into your hearts and create that consciousness of unity and harmony all over the world and enable you to live the life divine. You are all verily the embodiments of God, because God dwells within you, and so it is easy for you to remember Him and feel conscious of Him and thereafter live, move and have your being in Him.

Before concluding this short speech, Ramdas invokes God Almighty seated in the hearts of you all to pour forth His grace and bring about peace, unity, harmony and goodwill in the world.

AT THE VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY, ANURADHAPURA.
18th December, 1954.

Aim of Human Life

Beloved Devotees of God, — Ramdas is going to speak to you today on the aim of human life. Human life is a rare gift of God, the chief object of which is to realise God or attain liberation. If this precious gift is not utilised for attaining this goal, we shall be no better than animals. If we become true devotees of God, we shall be free from the tangle of action or Karma and from the cravings of all sense-desires. So long as our mind is thinking of worldly objects, we cannot be happy. When it turns towards God we get real happiness. What we have to do is that we must keenly aspire for God and remember Him constantly. God is always dwelling in our heart. He can be seen only when we have become pure in mind. We must aspire for Him, remember Him, contemplate on Him, meditate on Him and ultimately surrender ourselves to Him. By complete surrender to Him we shall see Him within ourselves, and our ego-sense will disappear. Such a devotee becomes the very embodiment of God. He is not only full of bliss and peace but also becomes an instrument for doing real good to the world. He is a veritable God upon earth and is worshipped as such.

God worships His Devotees

In the Bhagavad Gita, it is said that a devotee who has attained Jnana or liberation is verily God Himself. Lord Krishna showed to the world how He venerated

those who had reached this blessed state. His humble devotee, Sudama, went to have His Darshan in Dwaraka. An soon as He saw Sudama, He received him, placed him on His throne and worshipped him. On another occasion, when Narada went to have the Darshan of Krishna in Dwaraka, he was told, at the entrance to the palace of Krishna, that Krishna was not then available for Darshan. When asked why He was not available, Narada was told that the Lord was engaged in His usual worship. Narada was surprised to hear this and wondered whom Krishna would worship, He Himself being the supreme God. So he went inside quietly and peeped into the room where Krishna was sitting. He saw Krishna busy worshipping the images of Prahlada, Ambarisha, Draupadi, Valmiki, Narada and many other devotees. Narada went inside and asked Krishna what He was doing. Then Krishna said, "I am busy worshipping My God, and these are images of My God."

Verily, when a devotee has surrendered himself to God, he becomes God Himself. People in the world conquer so many external things, but these spiritual heroes have conquered their minds and have given up their ego-sense, finding God within themselves. In the Bible, we read that Jesus Christ had at one time washed and worshipped the feet of his own disciples. So, it is clear now that the devotees of God are really the embodiments or expressions of God Himself. Shiva Bhaktas are the forms of Shiva Himself ; so also all Vishnu Bhaktas are the forms of Vishnu. Buddha who had conquered his mind, and going deep down

within himself had found ultimate emancipation or Nirvana, is worshipped by millions of people on this earth. Jesus, who was the very embodiment of Divine love, is worshipped by thousands and thousands. The reason for this is that the Divine power, peace and joy had fully revealed themselves in these great personalities. Such illumined souls are a blessing to humanity. They had made this human life, which God granted them, a vehicle through which God could reveal Himself. Therefore the object of human life is to express the Divinity inherent in everyone of us. We must turn our mind more and more within us.

Name takes you to God

For the common man, who is active in the world, the method of constant repetition of God's name is the easiest. By the repetition of the Name, he can unite himself with the Divine within. As he chants the Name, he will gradually feel conscious of God within him. There is no easier way to uproot all desires from the mind and fill it with peace and tranquillity. So, God's name not only purifies the mind, but also brings the devotee into direct contact with God. Ramdas tells you about the glory of God's name, not only from his own experience, but also from what he has read of the experiences of great saints in India and other countries. Ramdas' advice to you, therefore, is to have one-pointed devotion to God, to have faith in Him and to repeat His holy name constantly and see Him within yourself and also everywhere. To take the name of God is not difficult. You have not to spend anything for it and you need not sit in a particular place, or

have any paraphernalia. You can have the Name on your lips at all times and in all places. When you are working with your hands, you can go on chanting the Name. When you are travelling in trains or other vehicles, you can still keep on chanting the Name. After some time, you will be able to repeat this Name automatically within, when you have real love and devotion for God.

Inspiration from Saints

This love and devotion for God can spring in our hearts only through the contact of saints. It is they who infuse into us faith in God, and inspire us to take His holy name. They are more gracious, loving and kind to us than our earthly father and mother, who are concerned only about our physical welfare. But the saints are more eager to see that we become free from the thraldom of Karma and attain the supreme goal—God. Their mission in this world is to awaken the slumbering souls from ignorance and lead them towards the Divine and make their lives blessed. Therefore, we have to contact saints, get inspiration from them, take God's name constantly, live a pure life and ultimately find God within us and behold Him everywhere in the universe. When we behold God everywhere, our life will be filled with Divine peace and bliss. If we achieve this goal, we shall have turned this precious gift of human life to the best account. Therefore, in conclusion, Ramdas advises you again to have great devotion for God, think of Him, ultimately realise Him and make your life blessed.

AT THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION HINDU COLLEGE, TRINCOMALEE.

19th December, 1954.

True Devotees of God

Beloved Children of God,—Ramdas is going to talk to you today how we can become true devotees and servants of God. The true sign of a devotee is that he constantly remembers God so that he may surrender himself totally to Him. By surrendering ourselves to God we are transformed within and without. This surrender enables us to realise Him within our heart, as a result of which our external life becomes a spontaneous expression of His power. Therefore devotion leads to Self-knowledge, and from Self-knowledge we get what is called supreme devotion or Parabhakti, by which we realise God's presence everywhere. Our mind will then be illumined with the knowledge of the Self and our heart will overflow with love towards all beings in the world.

Absolute Purity needed

What is needed is constant remembrance of God so that we may be pure in thought, word and deed. Absolute purity is an essential condition for God to reveal Himself within us. We must be free from lust, greed and wrath. We must develop what is called a Sattwic nature—harmonious, pure and enlightened nature. We must develop in our heart qualities of compassion, forgiveness, kindness and mercy. We must look upon all beings in the world as our brothers

and sisters. All man-made distinctions based upon religion, caste, creed, colour and nationality must disappear. God of all people, of all nations and of all religions is one and the same. We are His children. Recognize Him with this relationship and love each other. The great teachers of the world taught us the same way. Buddha taught us that we should purify ourselves and have compassion towards all living creatures. Jesus Christ asked us to love all beings as we love ourselves. Krishna taught us to see the Divine in each and everybody in the world. Prophet Mohammed taught us to submit to the will of God and become His instruments so that we can carry out His will in the world. If we can only follow the teachings of these great spiritual masters we shall have no quarrel among ourselves on any account.

The easiest way to remember God is to take His holy name. You can call God by any name you like ; Rama, Krishna, Jesus, Allah, Shiva or any other name that you hold dear. God is really nameless and formless. He is the all-pervading power and presence who envelops, guides and inspires us in every way. He is pure Spirit, pure Consciousness or pure Self. The great spiritual Masters who have realised God are His incarnations and expressions. These great Avatars and incarnations are the embodiments of God. They are the personal expressions of the Impersonal. So by adoring, remembering and by submitting ourselves to them we draw inspiration from them in order to elevate ourselves and realise God within.

Take God's Name constantly

To realise God or see God it is not necessary that we should give up our daily routine of life. If we are true devotees of God, we can find Him in our heart even when we are active in the world. God wants a pure heart and devotion for Him. If we cultivate true devotion for Him and through such devotion surrender ourselves to Him, we shall be able to find God within us, in any situation in which He may place us. We are entirely dependent upon Him because we have taken refuge in Him. In all our difficulties and troubles God mysteriously protects and saves us, or grants us necessary strength to face such situations. Therefore we should never deny Him and never forget Him. We must always remember Him, acknowledge Him as our Divine mother and master. The easy way. as Ramdas has told you, is to constantly keep your mind in His remembrance by the repetition of His holy, powerful, sweet and glorious name. However undesirable the thoughts coming into our mind, whatever the evil practices we are engaged in, the power of the Name is so great that it will dispel all such evil thoughts and all our actions will become pure. We shall then be able to serve others and relieve them of their distress. You know, selfishness is the cause of unhappiness. When we do our actions for the sake of others in a selfless spirit, we are really happy. Such actions can proceed from us only when our heart is filled with love. The nature of God who dwells within us is love. Therefore by constant remembrance we must realise God, who is love, in our own heart. Thereafter He becomes our

sole guide, inspirer and controller. Then we become His true devotees and servants, and make this human birth blessed. A lover and servant of God is a lover and servant of humanity. For such a devotee God resides in the hearts of all beings in the world. In his mind there will be no hatred or illwill towards anybody, Thereafter, he will be enjoying everlasting peace, joy and bliss, because he knows that he is the immortal Truth, ever united and one with the Divine. Ramdas' advice to you all is that you should be devoted to God and, by taking His name constantly, purify yourselves and find Him in your heart, and love all beings and creatures in the world equally without any distinction.

AT THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY,
SRI SIVANANDA TAPOVAN, TRINCOMALEE.
20th December, 1954.

How to win Guru's Grace

Beloved Devotees of God, — Ramdas is talking to you today upon the subject "Contact of saints and Guru's grace." Before we try to contact a saint, it is necessary that we should, in the first place, know who a saint is and what his qualities are. A saint is one who has realised God. He has got equal vision, as he beholds God everywhere. From his heart flows the Ganges of Love to all in the world. He is all compassion, forgiveness and peace.

Such are the qualities of a saint. By the contact of a saint alone the soul is liberated from the bondage of ignorance. In his presence we should humble ourselves to the dust. Then only his grace will pour on us. We should not live with him to teach him how he should act. We are to obey him in every respect. His contact will enable us to shed our ego-sense and all the lower desires. So, when we are in his company, we must derive the utmost benefit by purifying ourselves and freeing ourselves from the ego-sense, and realise the state of inner freedom and peace. If we become humble, he raises us to his own spiritual status.

In these days we see so many people going to meet saints. Some of them live in saints' company for a pretty long time. But what benefit do they derive? Most of them go there not for their spiritual uplift, but

to gain their own selfish ends ; and those who are with saints are not living in harmony among themselves, but create strife and discord. The object of going to live with saints is to free ourselves from our low desires and passions. On the other hand, if we remain with them still retaining our weaknesses and frailties, and give free vent to them, we are wasting our life even after having their contact.

Therefore, the best way we can utilize our hours of stay and communion with saints is to liberate ourselves from all our weaknesses by loving each other and elevate ourselves to a state of equality and peace. We call ourselves their disciples, but we become their teachers. You may remember an instance in the life of Jesus when he saw his disciples fighting among themselves as to who among them was the greatest. Jesus told them that he who was the servant of all the rest was the greatest among them. There is no greater pain the disciples can inflict on their Guru than by fighting among themselves for precedence.

Guru's Grace essential

The Guru's object in life is to bring harmony and peace. Without a Guru there is no salvation. Even the great Avatars, Rama and Krishna, had their own Guru. When we read the lives of great saints and devotees of the Lord, we find that each one of them had his or her own Guru. Guru's grace is essential for our redemption. When we have met a God-realised saint, we must make use of his company for the realisation of our Self and attainment of immortal bliss and

peace. In the presence of the saint we must examine ourselves and see our own defects and try to remove them instead of finding fault with others and picking up quarrels. Therefore, our aim as disciples of a saint is to love him with all our heart, obey him in all respects and learn to love our fellow-beings with equal vision as the Guru does.

The Guru's heart is so soft that he is always eager that all those who have taken refuge in him are made free from their lower nature and perfectly happy both inwardly and outwardly. He is pouring his grace in abundance on his devotees and tirelessly instructing them as to how they should behave themselves in order to have the vision of Divinity within and without. It is not enough if we simply say we are the disciples of such and such a saint. We must follow his teachings. Guru's grace can flow into us only if we carry out his words and thus please him. But, unfortunately, we see today a different picture. Often we doubt whether we are right in calling ourselves devotees of a great saint. Still we take pride in doing so when we have not developed even an iota of the lofty qualities we should cultivate by our contact with the illumined personality of the Guru. Our duty, therefore, is to obey implicitly the advice of the Guru. We thereby cleanse ourselves of all our impurities, and make ourselves fit to realise the Divine within us and achieve immortality.

Out of his infinite compassion the Guru gives the disciple a Mantra which he asks him to repeat constantly. The disciple should keep this Mantra on his tongue ceaselessly in order to rid his mind of all base impulses,

passions and desires. If he does this he will be acting, according to the advice of the Guru and his life will be illumined with divine peace, joy and wisdom. This is the right relationship that should prevail between the Guru and his disciple. Otherwise, people will simply hang on to him for nothing at all except to worry him and give him pain at every step. They will also give pain to all around.

Sri Sivananda Tapovan

We have come here to Sri Sivananda Tapovan, a sacred place dedicated to the great Swami of Rishikesh. Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati is a God-realised personality. He can be looked upon as one of the spiritual leaders of the age, because he has been a world figure sending out his spiritual messages to all parts of the earth for the guidance of thousands of seekers after truth. This spiritual centre has been started with many objects, mainly spiritual, but also social and humanitarian. A few minutes ago Ramdas was taken to the newly started dispensary where Ayurvedic medicines are given free to poor patients. Ramdas has been told also that small children are given instruction here. This is the valuable work which this institution is carrying on and Ramdas can see, as he has been going round here, how noble are the aims of this institution.

Ramdas has heard of and seen many Divine Life Societies started in different parts of India and abroad. They all help to awaken the ignorant to fhe awareness of their spiritual nature and also to inspire them to

serve the poor and distressed fellow-beings. This work has been done in the name of and as inspired by Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati. Look at the wonder ! A saint, who is somewhere in the Himalayas, has been responsible for such vast and extensive activities for the amelioration of the conditions of unhappy humanity and for bringing light and peace to millions !

AT THE SARADA VIDYALAYA, TAMPALAKAMAM, NEAR TRINCOMALEE.

21st December, 1954.

Sri Saradamani Devi

Beloved Children of God, — Ramdas is not going to make a long speech to you. He invokes the Lord Almighty's blessings upon you all so that your hearts may be filled with true devotion for God and you may grow up into His true devotees and be blessed with health, prosperity and peace. This school has been started in memory of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, the great Avatar of the present age, and the name of the school is Sarada Vidyalaya. Sarada Devi, you know, was the wife of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and she is the Holy Mother of us all. She was veritably Saraswati, as her name signifies. So you should adore her and receive inspiration from her for your educational and spiritual uplift. May her grace ever pour upon you all!

AT THE VIVEKANANDA VIDYALAYA, BATTICALOA.
22nd December, 1954.

Under the auspices of the Hindu Women's Association

Self-Surrender

Beloved Forms of the Divine Mother, — Ramdas is speaking to you now about self-surrender. God is both the supreme Truth and the divine power. He is at once Shiva and Shakti. It must be understood that by His Shakti or power alone everything happens in the world. Without His will and power nothing can happen. To recognise this truth is to surrender ourselves to His power. In this state of surrender we take everything that happens to us as for our good. God is all goodness, love and kindness. Whatever He does for us is always for our good. If our attitude towards all happenings in the world is of this nature, we shall have no reason to be unhappy, because we know then that all situations are brought about by Him. Our attitude towards happenings is responsible for our happiness or misery.

Actions and events are by themselves neither good nor bad. We take certain situations as for our good and we are happy. At other times, we consider certain situations as bad and we are unhappy. When we know that all things happen by the will of the Divine, who is all love and compassion, we shall always be happy and contented. In this state of absolute peace and contentment, as a result of complete surrender to His will, our life will flow out in selfless service to all. Therefore

we must do all work only in His name and for His sake. This consciousness can be with us only if we remember God constantly. The moment we forget Him, our ego-sense will raise its head and we shall feel that we do everything. If we keep up a continuous stream of God-remembrance, the ego-sense will have no place in our life. The easy way to keep up the continuous remembrance of God is to chant His name. We have got plenty of spare time during the day which we can utilise for remembering God by chanting His name. The remembrance of God makes us conscious of His existence within us, and thereafter we shall feel his presence always with us until at last we realise the truth that we and He are one.

Supreme Freedom

In this state of realisation of the Divine, we shall behold Him everywhere. The sense of distinction between us and all beings around us will vanish. This is the great truth taught to us by the Avatars, saints and teachers of India and the whole world. This realisation grants us supreme freedom or Moksha, which the soul aspires for, because in that state of realisation we are free from the individual-sense and the bondage of Karma, birth and death. Therefore Ramdas would have you all take to the repetition of God's name always, by which practice you will be able to realise your true life and existence. Devotion to God, as Ramdas has already said, is the chief aim of human life. Devotion is developed by constant remembrance of Him. Devotion or Bhakti leads to Jnana. Jnana is the knowledge of God as existent within us and everywhere about us.

AT THE TOWN HALL, BATTICALOA.
22nd December, 1954.

Need for God-realisation

Beloved Friends, — Ramdas is a humble child of God. When he says 'Ramdas', he refers to himself. His God is residing in the hearts of all beings and creatures. Before he starts his talks, he salutes the supreme God who is the Lord of the whole universe. Ramdas was sent out of India on a world tour by God. After going over Europe, America, Japan, Hongkong and Malaya, he has come here to Ceylon. The object of his tour is to propagate the ideal of universal love and service. This can be propagated only by one who has the universal vision of God. Universal vision is born of the realisation of God. So our true object in life should be to realise God so that we may practise universal love. Why should we realise God and practise universal love? Because the quest of all human beings, in fact of all creatures, is happiness. This can be had only by realising God. God stands for eternal bliss and peace. So, it is when we tune our mind with Him that we attain true happiness and peace. When we have found *that* unchanging and eternal peace within ourselves, we learn to love each other without entertaining hatred or illwill of any kind. Thereafter there will be peace, goodwill, and harmony on earth. To establish this harmony and goodwill, great teachers had taken birth in this world from time to time.

Four Great Spiritual Masters

Mainly, there are four religions in the world—Hinduism, Christianity, Islam and Buddhism. The great teachers of these four religions are Lord Krishna, Jesus, Mohammed and Buddha. The object of their advent in the world was to create harmony. Let us try to understand the teachings of each one of these spiritual masters. Buddha, by conquering the evil forces within him, reached a state of immortal peace, and thereupon dedicated his entire life to show us how we can love our fellow-beings with an equal vision. He taught us how we can be pure in thought, word and deed. He asked us to give love for hate. Only by giving love for hate, we can have harmony and peace among ourselves. Jesus came at a time when, in Palestine, there was chaos and disorder as far as religion was concerned. He taught us that we should love our neighbours as ourselves. So his message was universal love. He has said that all those who say that they love God and are devoted to God, but do not love their fellow-beings, have really no devotion for God. The true test of our love for God is our love for our fellow-beings. Then we have the teachings of Prophet Mohammed, who said that by submitting to the will of God we must free ourselves from the ego-sense and create the consciousness of brotherhood amongst us. His message was brotherhood among men. We are all children of one Divine parent, God. Now, Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita has taught us that we should see everywhere God alone, because God dwells in the heart of everyone of us. He went

a step further and asked us also to behold the whole universe as the manifestation of God. So, these great masters came to the world in different climes and at different times when people were living in disharmony and discord. If we are true followers of these great teachers, we can have no reason to quarrel amongst ourselves over anything. By following them strictly we can make our lives happy and create an atmosphere where all will be happy.

Secret of Happiness

The secret of true happiness lies in realising God and loving all beings as ourselves. Since we are living only on the physical plane, the sense of separation and diversity is confronting us with the result that we produce dissension and strife. If we unite ourselves, we shall know that we are related to each other, not merely as human beings, but as the expressions of the Divine spirit. Therefore we must consciously remember this universal Spirit, God, so that we can realise the spiritual kinship and unity amongst us. This realisation will elevate us and fill us with joy and peace and also contribute towards world peace and harmony.

The easiest way by which we can have this consciousness is the constant remembrance of God. The more we remember Him the greater will be the spiritual awakening within us. This consciousness will spread out to our outer life and activities. The more we tune our lives with God and commune with Him, the more will our mind, senses and all activities be purified. All the evil forces that are working in us will disappear.

In this way our life will become really blessed. We can remember Him constantly only by taking His name.

Unity of Religions

God is really without any name or form. He is universal Consciousness, Spirit or Truth. He may be called by any name which we hold dear. Muslims call Him Allah; Hindus call Him Rama, Krishna, Shiva and Christians call Him Jehovah, Jesus. If the devotee of any one of these teachers is true to God, he will keep His name constantly on his lips and attune his life to the Divine life. All differences that are prevailing now will disappear, if this rule is understood by all. Each religion will then respect other religions. If we do so we shall be able to produce the much-needed world-brotherhood. In this consciousness of brotherhood there will be peace, harmony and joy everywhere in the world.

So Ramdas appeals to you all to keep God's name constantly on your lips and look upon all beings on this earth as the children of one God, and cultivate mutual love and service. We see there is so much suffering and distress in the world. It behoves every one of us, who has power and ability, to use all our energy to relieve the sufferings of humanity. Of course, as you commune with God, your heart is purified and your life is blessed with the inner union with the Divine and you will be able to help humanity in their trouble. Ramdas has been to Europe and America, where he saw a community-feeling or a feeling of harmony and union among people. They are helping each other as brothers,

although they are not related to each other. Therefore there is always plenty, prosperity and happiness in the material field. What we need in Ceylon and India is that we should follow their example as far as material progress is concerned, and at the same time we must cling to our religion which raises us to the consciousness of Divinity in all beings and creatures on the earth. We must shed our ego-sense, help each other mutually and see that all of us progress materially. If we do this, based upon the knowledge of the immortal all-pervading Spirit, we shall have real peace and joy. This will be joy not dependent upon external conditions and circumstances, but independent.

The peace and prosperity they are having in the Western countries are not stable because any time wars may break out among them and destroy their prosperity and everything. Only prosperity founded upon love, on the basis of the knowledge that God is everywhere, will be everlasting. We people here who have faith in God, must see that *that* faith is translated into action, in loving each other, helping each other and creating an atmosphere in which there will be no misery, no pain and no scarcity of any kind. Therefore Ramdas, in conclusion, requests you all to have the thought of God continuously in your mind and see that your life is purified in such a way as to make it mingle with the lives of all beings about you and thus enjoy peace for yourselves and contribute towards the peace of all human beings on this earth.

AT THE LEPER ASYLUM, MANTIVU, NEAR BATTICALOA.

23rd December, 1954.

Sing His Glorious Name

Beloved Friends,—For Ramdas you are all manifestations of God, because God dwells in the hearts of every one of you. Ramdas' advice to you is that you should remember God constantly so that you may feel His presence within you. You are all under the protection of God and He is the great healer of your mental and physical maladies. Therefore Ramdas asks you to take His name constantly, as that is the most simple way to remember Him. By the repetition of God's name you will gradually be able to purify your heart and become conscious of Him in your heart. Then you will be directly aware of His grace and protection. Therefore, with all devotion, you should constantly sing the glorious name of God. Whatever name you utter, it is the name of God; it may be Shiva, Rama, Krishna or any other Name.

Ramdas has come over to see you and he is happy that you have assembled here before him. As a result of his meeting you on this occasion, Ramdas feels sure that true devotion will spring up in your hearts. You should commune with God all day by taking His name. You must also sing of His greatness and glory. God is all love, compassion and peace. He who depends upon Him is never lost. He will always protect His devotees with all love and affection. If you would like to have

any name of God to be given to you by Ramdas on this occasion, you may tell him so. (They all wanted Ganesh Mantra). Now Ramdas will chant the Mantra thrice and you must all repeat it together: "Jaya Ganesha Jaya Ganesha Pahi Mam. Jaya Ganesha Jaya Ganesha Pahi Mam. Jaya Ganesha Jaya Ganesha Pahi Mam". Ramdas' last word to you is that you should have this Mantra always on your tongue. If you do so, you will see its wonderful efficacy and your mind will be perfectly at peace and the diseases of your body will disappear by God's grace.

AT THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SCHOOL, AKKARAPPATTU.

23rd December, 1954.

Nishkama Bhakti

Beloved Devotees,—Ramdas is speaking to you today on Bhakti or devotion. There are two kinds of Bhakti. One is Sakama Bhakti, that is, Bhakti with desire. The other is Nishkama Bhakti, desireless devotion. We are devoted to God for various reasons. Some of us want to get wealth, prosperity, progeny and many other material objects. This kind of Bhakti gives us what we ask for from God, but it does not give us real happiness and peace. The things we ask for from God are not permanent, and therefore not capable of giving us true happiness. So, what we have to pray to God, through devotion to Him, is to grant us immortal happiness and peace. This desire can be fulfilled only when we see Him and realise Him.

God is immortal peace dwelling in the hearts of us all. He is described in the Shastras as Satchidananda. This Satchidananda is within us and by attaining Him we get everlasting peace and happiness. So our devotion for God should be only fot getting His Darshan, to see Him within ourselves. This is Nish-kama Bhakti or desireless devotion, because when we are devoted to God we do not expect anything from God except Himself. God is prepared to become ours if we pray to Him to be ours. Instead of asking for Him, we ask from Him many perishable things. The

object of human life is to have His Darshan, which we can have within ourselves only by continuous thought, contemplation and remembrance of God.

Bhakta becomes Bhagawan

The object of devotion should be to realise God in our heart and allow Him to fill all parts of our being with His light and power. This done, our hearts will be overflowing with divine love towards all beings in the world. Our eyes will see only God everywhere. Our hands will work only for the good of everybody and we shall ultimately become the very embodiments of God, completely filled with bliss, and shall ever remain in ecstasy. In this state the difference between the Bhakta and Bhagawan will disappear. The Bhakta, by constant remembrance and surrender to God, becomes God Himself. So when you constantly think of God you become His very image. Then it is you enjoy immortal bliss and peace.

Practice of Devotion

We do not perceive Him within ourselves, because we are ignorant and impure. Just as in a muddy pond, which is disturbed, we do not see our reflection, so also when the mind is full of evil desires and is restless, we do not see the reflection of God in it. Therefore the first thing necessary on the path of devotion is purification of the mind. Purity can be attained only by remembering God. Remembrance gradually grows into consciousness of His existence. As the consciousness of Him grows from day to day our mind becomes purer and purer because His light, power and glory will

be revealed in us day after day. The darkness in the mind will be dispelled by His light, until at last the mind becomes entirely free from all evil desires, such as lust, greed, wrath, malice and jealousy. Now we can say that Divine grace has come to us. Our aspiration for Him on one side and His grace on the other together produce the Divine illumination.

God's Name alone is enough

So long as we are attached to the body and external objects, we shall never know true peace and happiness. What we should do is to tune our mind with the Supreme Being, who is all bliss and peace. By constant remembrance we must rise above the body-consciousness and dwell in Him. When you rise above the body-consciousness you will feel you are one with Him. The easy way to raise ourselves from the individual sense to the cosmic consciousness is constant remembrance of God through the repetition of His holy name. The moment you take the Name you begin to feel that you have a higher existence, not merely the physical. Remembrance of God is remembrance of our true Self. We have forgotten our true Self and we think we are merely bodies made up of the five elements. This physical consciousness is the cause of our vision of diversity and the sense of diversity is the cause of our bondage and misery. So, to dissolve this diversity and realise unity and oneness we must realise God within ourselves. Constant remembrance of God, through the repetition of His name, will enable us to realise the supreme goal of this life—God. God's name is all-

powerful. It will destroy all the evil desires of the mind. It will make the mind absolutely pure. It will grant you untold strength and power. It will take you to a state in which there will be no fear of death, sorrow, anxiety, cares and worries. It will enable you to realise the Supreme Spirit as the all-pervading Truth and Light. If you are really earnest in your quest to realise God, then have one-pointed devotion for Him and take His name constantly.

One God behind all Forms

Any name of God will do, because God has many names although He is one, and all the names lead us to the same universal Spirit. The forms may be different, but the supreme Truth behind all these forms is one. There are some devotees who worship Him as Krishna, some as Rama, some as Shiva and so on. He is worshipped in many names and forms, and we must know that all these names and forms are of the One who is nameless and formless and who has assumed all these forms for the sake of His devotees. So, among the devotees there should not be any quarrels or differences in regard to the names of God. They all worship the one God behind these forms. You know when we stand before the image of God, we pray to Him as the all-pervading, eternal Brahman or Spirit When we have realised God as such, we shall know that all these forms that are worshipped by various devotees belong to that Spirit. The great sages and saints have realised the Truth and they tell us that we should not make any distinction among the forms of

God. Through the worship of these forms and repetition of their names your hearts will be purified and ultimately you will find that the Ideal which you worship, the great Truth that you seek, is within yourself. This means, the external worship must end in internal worship.

Realise God within

You know, in the life of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, who was worshipping the image of Kali, that when he was given flowers to worship the image he put them on his own head, because he found the image within himself. So, whatever form of worship we may adopt, we must merge our little individuality in God and realise Him within ourselves and see Him in His manifestations. This great achievement in our spiritual endeavour is possible only through complete surrender to God, through the repetition of His holy name. This is the only easy method to approach God, to see Him and experience Him in our daily life. For this purpose, it is not necessary that you should keep yourself away from the world, but you can live and move in the world by constantly remembering Him. The only condition is constant remembrance of God in whatever state or circumstances you are.

God saves through Saints

What you need is sincere devotion and aspiration for Him. Given this, God Himself will take you up, purify you and enable you to see Him. You will get the contact of saints, who will shower their blessings on you. The blessings of Mahatmas are very valuable

in the spiritual life of an aspirant. When you meet a saint, in whom you have complete trust, you may depend upon it that he will take care of you, just as a mother takes care of her child, and guide you in your spiritual path. By his grace you will be able to keep the Divine name always on your tongue, after you have received the Name from the saint. Thereafter your path becomes easy. Your mind will be easily concentrated on the Name and will soon become pure. When you receive the Name from the saint, he gives with it his spiritual strength and power. Ramdas is telling you this from his own personal experience.

Ramdas was given the Ram Mantra by his Guru. After his initiation, Ramdas found that he could repeat the Name constantly without any break and by such constant repetition his mind very easily became perfectly pure and still. Then he began to feel that the Divine that he was seeking was within him. He was beginning to feel a strange peace and joy rising within his heart. This did not depend upon any external object of enjoyment. It revealed itself from within and filled him through and through. Then he knew that he was not the body but the all-pervading, eternal Truth. When the body perishes, he knows that he does not perish. This is the realisation which grants perfect fearlessness and immortal peace.

So, only two things are necessary for you. One is Guru's grace and the other is initiation of the Divine name by the Guru. If you get these two things, you will have gained the purpose of this human life,

namely, the realisation of the highest goal, God ; and you will be able to get what you want in this life, because you are all after happiness, and happiness can be yours only after you realise the supreme Truth.

AT THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SCHOOL, KALMUNAI
24th December, 1954.

Greatness of God's Name

Beloved Devotees,—Ramdas is speaking to you about the greatness of God's name. God's name is not different from God. He who has God's name always on his tongue is conscious of God's presence with him. Because, God's name makes our mind remember Him, and as God is dwelling within our heart, such remembrance draws our mind within. The power of the Name is such that it purifies our heart and enables us to feel God within us. God's name is very sweet because God is pure bliss and peace. If you have the Name on your lips you will enjoy the bliss of union with God. Just as the bee, when drinking honey from the flower, gets absorbed in it, so when you repeat the Name you will get absorbed in the Name. You can sing the name of God in any tune and attune your mind to the sound of the Name. When your mind is in tune with the sound of the Name, you will lose consciousness of the body and remain in a state of divine ecstasy. So, to unite yourself with God and feel your oneness with Him, there is no easier way than the repetition of God's name. All forms of worship and Yogas are done in order to realise God. This kind of union with God is possible only by continuous thought of God. God's name can be repeated at all places and at all times. It does not require any particular condition, rules or regulations to be observed. It can purify us whenever and wherever we repeat it.

How the Name purifies

Great saints and devotees have been telling us that by the power of the Name we can realise the highest spiritual experience. All the impurities, evil desires and passions of the mind will be destroyed by the power of the Name. Man's heart is filled with many impurities which are responsible for his state of misery and unhappiness. Unless the heart is thoroughly purified, one cannot approach God. This purification comes to him through Divine grace. What he has to do is to take His holy name with utmost devotion and find refuge in Him. The moment he hands himself over to God, God takes him up, purifies him and grants him His vision. Therefore we must trust Him in the first place, take His name and surrender ourselves to Him, and then by His grace get ourselves purified and obtain His Darshan.

Ramdas speaks from Experience

Ramdas is a servant of God and is going from place to place to propagate the greatness of the Name. He tells you about the greatness of the Name because it has given him invaluable benefit. When he was struggling to realise God, he found that the Divine name was the easiest way to purify the mind and realise God. If you are really earnest in having the vision of God, Ramdas would advise you to have the Name constantly on your lips, and you will surely attain Him. God's name can be repeated either silently or aloud and you may repeat any name of God, because all names are His names. God, who is nameless and formless,

has assumed various forms and names. What is needed of you is one-pointed devotion for Him and earnest endeavour to realise Him. By realising God you will attain supreme happiness. You know that when we forget God and pursue the pleasure of the senses we are not happy. Real happiness can be had only by remembering and realising God.

Name gives Pure Joy

God is described as *Satchidananda*—absolute existence, consciousness and bliss. Verily, God Himself is bliss. When our mind is in tune with Him, we enjoy infinite bliss. By doing Sadhana, it does not mean that we are going to get happiness or Moksha only after we are dead or at some distant future. The very act of devotion to God and of uniting ourselves with Him gives us bliss from moment to moment. The instant we step on the path of devotion and take His name with all love and devotion, we get pure joy and peace. Therefore, those who have understood the power of the Name say that it is sweeter than nectar.

Ramdas prays to the Lord Almighty to create one-pointed devotion in the hearts of you all so that you may have His name always on your tongue and enjoy infinite bliss.

AT THE VIVEKANANDA VIDYALAYA, KALLADY UPPODAI, NEAR BATTICALOA.

24th December, 1954.

Devotion

Beloved Embodiments of God,—Verily, you are all, for Ramdas, the forms of his Eternal Beloved. Ramdas is going to speak to you today on devotion. We are living in a world which is only a passing show, that is, transitory in all the manifestations. In this world of unreality there is only one Truth, and that is God. If we forget Him and live in this world, we invite misery, pain, sorrow and fear. Therefore, in our life, we should make it a point to remember God everyday. By constant communion with Him, by remembering Him, we shall have inner peace and joy.

A Story

Ramdas is going to tell you a story in this connection. Once a saint was passing through a street. On one side of the road, on the verandah of a house, a man was grinding rice on a grinding stone. He was putting rice into the hole of the upper stone and was grinding it. His object was to convert the rice into flour. When the rice grains were being crushed between the two stones, he thought within himself that he was, like those crushed grains, suffering untold miseries in this Samsara. At this very thought his heart melted and he began to cry. The saint saw him crying, approached him and asked, "Brother, why are you crying?" Then the man replied that he felt he was

like the grains of rice which were being crushed between the two stones. Then the saint asked him to lift up the upper stone, and showed him how, near the centre peg, some whole grains of rice remained uncrushed, while those grains which had been away from the peg had been powdered. He told the grinder, "Look here, if you remember God and feel His nearness, you will never be crushed in the Samsara. You must always be attached to God, love God and be devoted to God, and then you will be able to live in the world just like the uncrushed grains which are in close touch with the peg. You will remain unaffected by the various miseries which are incidental to worldly life."

Sri Ramakrishna's Devotion

Therefore, when we are living, moving and acting in this world, we should never forget God. As far as possible, we must remember Him throughout the day. The easy way to keep up a continuous stream of God-remembrance is to repeat His holy name. The repetition will develop into a consciousness of His presence within us. We have before us the great examples of devotees who remembered God throughout their lives and lived blissfully and worked for the benefit and uplift of others. Among these spiritual luminaries, we have before us the great sage and saint of Dakshineshwar, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. He is an ideal example of the highest type of devotee. Even to remember him is a source of immense inspiration to a spiritual aspirant. He started life as a simple worshipper of Goddess Kali. As days went on, his devotion for

Mother Kali increased a hundredfold until at last he pined day and night for the Darshan of Kali. Mother Kali at last was gracious enough to give him Darshan. Her luminous form appeared before him whenever he appealed to Her to show Herself before him. In this vision he was enjoying ineffable bliss and peace. Later, Mother Kali brought him in contact with a saint called Totapuri. He proved to be the Guru of Ramakrishna, because he granted him the vision of Kali as the all-pervading, infinite Spirit. He was granted the knowledge of the supreme Self. Now it was that he began to behold the Mother everywhere, in all beings and creatures. He saw the whole universe as the manifestation of the Divine Mother. He had renounced completely all desires of the flesh. He looked upon his consort, Sri Sarada Devi, as his mother. Sarada Devi is a rare and beautiful flower of Indian womanhood. She radiated divine love, light and peace. Paramahamsa and Sarada Devi lived together in Dakshineshwar.

Saint's Contact and Grace

It was then that Swami Vivekananda came in contact with Sri Ramakrishna who infused all his spiritual power into the heart of Swami Vivekananda and raised him to a spiritual eminence which is rare in the world. Swami Vivekananda carried out the great mission for which Sri Ramakrishna came to the world, by visiting the various countries of the world and propagating the great ideal of Vedanta. Swami Vivekananda awakened in the hearts of millions a

longing for God, and granted them the strength to realise God.

So, in order to develop love for God and to keep His name constantly on our lips we must have the contact and grace of a saint. Society of saints is essential to turn our mind towards God. We must honour saints, listen to their advice and serve them in a selfless spirit. When we become entitled to their grace, then our life becomes blessed and we shall always be conscious of God dwelling in our heart. The impurities of the mind, which stand in the way of our devotion to God, are dispelled by the touch of the saint. We have to listen to their advice and act up to it. If we do so, we can live in the world and still be out of it.

Karma as Means to Yoga

Ramakrishna Paramahamsa says, "Whenever you are active in the world, you should keep one of your hands always at the feet of God and work in the world with the other hand. Whenever you are free from work, both your hands should be laid at the feet of God." What he means is that you should keep your mind always in communion with God, and work in the world. This is possible, as we find various instances of people having continuous remembrance of God while still active and working. Sri Krishna, in the Bhagavad Gita, asks us to do everything in His name and for His sake. When all your actions are offered to the Lord, they become divine, because they serve to purify you, elevate you and grant you the vision of God.

In His teachings Sri Krishna holds Karma Yoga as a very high attainment. Karma Yoga means work done in a state of union with God. The easiest way to unite with God, when you are active in the world, is to take His holy name whenever you are free from work.

In conclusion, Ramdas would like to give you one suggestion, rather the final suggestion. That is, two things are essential for you on the path of God-realisation. These are: the company of saintly souls and the repetition of God's holy name. By recourse to these methods you will be able to be free from the bondage of Samsara and attain immortal bliss, peace and freedom.

AT THE BADULLA COLLEGE
25th December, 1954.

Under the auspices of the Saiva Paripal Sangham

Divine Love

Beloved Friends,—Ramdas, this humble servant of God, is addressing you with a few words on "Divine Love." There are two kinds of love. One is called personal love and the other impersonal. Personal love relates to the physical part of our being and impersonal love to the spiritual part. Our life is intended to practise impersonal love, because by practising this kind of love alone we can realise true happiness and peace in this world. You all know that our aim in life is to achieve peace and happiness. Impersonal love can also be described as universal love because this love is revealed in our heart when we realise the wonderful universal Truth, Spirit or Existence, which is called God. To devote ourselves to God in order to realise Him means shedding our individual sense and knowing that we are the universal Truth or Spirit. Only after realising the Truth we shall be able to practise universal love, for it is then that our heart will be loving all people and all beings in the world alike. This is a solvent of all diversity. Our individual life is cut off and separated from the universal life and existence. If we want this life of ours to mingle or dissolve in the universal life and existence, we have to cultivate this universal love.

How to attain Divine Love

But how are we to attain this love ? This is possible only when we transcend the individual sense or the ego-sense in us. The ego-sense is the cause of our unhappiness, bondage and misery in the world. As we expand our vision by communion with the universal Spirit through remembrance and meditation to that extent, we feel free within and our love goes out to all in equal measure and in the exercise of this love we enjoy supreme happiness. The selfish mind is unhappy, and where there is unselfishness there is happiness. People do not understand this truth. They think that by becoming more and more selfish they are going to be happier. But the reverse is the case. Although they know this from experience, they cannot shed their ego-sense. They strive day after day to possess more and more things of the world so that they develop a crystallised state of selfishness. Ego-sense is the cause of this crystallised individuality in us. So, what we should do is to free ourselves from this individual sense by destroying all the low grovelling desires in us which tie us down.

Message of Spiritual Masters

In the present condition of the world, we very badly need the practice of universal love. Otherwise we shall not be able to create an atmosphere of peace and harmony in the world. Therefore, love has to be practised in our daily life when we deal with our fellow-beings. This is the message which the great teachers of the world gave us from time to time. Buddha taught us that we should return love for hate.

Hate must be uprooted from our hearts and then alone this love will reveal itself. Hate is born of individual sense, individual self. The individual self must go and we must realise the universal Self. Then only we can give love for hate. Otherwise not. Then it is that we find unity in diversity. Jesus taught us that we should love our neighbours as ourselves. Our self and the self in the neighbours, we must realise, are the same. Then only we shall be able to love our neighbours as ourselves. This love is based on the knowledge of the universal Self and not on the individual self. We must transcend or destroy the individual self and realise the universal Self in the knowledge of which alone we can cultivate universal love.

Then again, Sri Krishna has asked us in the Bhagavad Gita to surrender ourselves to the Divine completely and be free from the ego-sense. When the ego-sense is eliminated, we shall have the universal vision, and based upon that vision we love all beings alike. Prophet Mohammed has told us that by love alone we can unite together in the name of one God. Among the warring tribes in Arabia he brought brotherhood, and asked them to stand united in the name of one supreme Being, God. So, God stands for love. Jesus has clearly told us that God is love and he who dwells in love dwells in God and God dwells in him. He also said that God as love is dwelling in our hearts and that the kingdom of heaven is within us. When we know that God, who is love, is dwelling within us, we must feel conscious of His existence within us by continuous remembrance and meditation which leads

us to a state of surrender of our ego-sense and the realisation of the cosmic all-pervading Spirit. If we realise this Truth, we cannot have illwill towards anybody. All hate will be uprooted from our hearts. We shall have no enemies in the world. We shall look upon all beings as the expression of that universal Truth. So we have to go deep down within ourselves in the remembrance of the universal Spirit and realise the oneness of life in the consciousness of the Spirit.

In this connection, Ramdas would like to remind you of the story of the man who wanted to have some entertainment, and got a number of mirrors fitted in his room to see his own reflection everywhere. The dog that came later died fighting with its reflections thinking that they were its enemies. Similarly we fight among ourselves without knowing that the Self in us pervades everywhere and has assumed all the forms in the universe. We think that others are separate from us. We should not behave like the dog, but must be like the man who sees only himself everywhere and is blissful and happy. He has no hate or illwill towards anybody. If we go deep down within ourselves, we shall find that immortal Spirit which pervades everywhere, and in the light and knowledge of the Spirit we cannot but love each other. We shall then be a mountain of patience. This is the message delivered to us by the great teachers of the world, who actually lived this life.

Have Love for Humanity

You may do any kind of spiritual discipline, but if you have not got this love you have gained nothing. A

true lover of God is a lover of humanity. There are so many who say that they love God but quarrel with their fellow-beings and neighbours. That is not true love. We must cultivate that love by which we can feel one with our fellow-beings and serve them selflessly so that we can, by such service, fulfil the purpose of this life. We want happiness and peace, but we are doing things quite opposite to what we should do in order to gain it. Whatever we do now only helps to create more discord and confusion in our life and the resultant misery and unhappiness. What we want is the expansion of our love by eradicating from our mind all evil thoughts and impurities. Love should be the keynote of our life. That is why we are asked by sages, saints and great devotees of the world that we must conquer the mind, go deep down within and find the basis of our life. With the knowledge of this basic Reality we must live this iife. Then we shall not only live happily but also contribute towards the world's happiness. So love must be the dominating factor in our life and that alone can redeem us and fill us with peace and joy.

How Ramdas was led by God

Our friend spoke a little while ago referring to Ramdas' life of renunciation, which started in 1922. Ramdas can tell you that this great change came to him, not as a result of his own effort or initiative, but by the power, will and grace of God. Until this transformation came to him he was living only an ordinary life. This does not mean that he was selfish or has inflicted any injury upon others or exploited

others for his personal happiness. Only he was not aware then that there was a great Reality underlying this universal manifestation and that by attaining that Reality one could become supremely happy and peaceful, free from all hate, anger and quarrelsomeness, which brought him in daily conflict with his fellow-beings. When this great change came, Ramdas was taken off his feet, as it were. He did not know what was going to happen to him. He was asked to repeat the name of God constantly, to keep the mind serene and calm, so that his mind, the outer mind could go deeper within himself to find the truth on which his life was based. For that purpose he was made to give up everything, all attachments to the worldly life, worldly relations and possessions, and he was taken from place to place in a state which was really wonderful. In that state he had neither attraction nor repulsion for the world. The world ceased to exist, as it were, for him. His mind was merged in ineffable peace and bliss. At last he found that he was merely an instrument in the hands of the Divine and he was being led by that Power.

Having experienced supreme joy in that state, he has been going about telling everybody that, if they lived on the lower levels of life like the animals, they could never get real happiness. They must transcend all these and go deep down within themselves and realise the all-pervading eternal Spirit, which is pure bliss and peace. Till then, they can never know what true peace is. Therefore they must all strive to attain this peace by stilling the waves of the mind, freeing it

from lust, greed and wrath. In this way, for nearly four years he was wandering from place to place, and during his wanderings he was made to remain for days together in caves and jungles in order that he may get the fullness of this spiritual experience which is the aim and purpose of human life. That was why he was able to love all beings alike, and he had no axe to grind in any way.

Truth is Unfathomable

When you have found eternal peace for yourself, you do not have to fight with people for anything which, you think, may give you happiness. Your happiness then does not depend on any worldly thing. You have found it within yourself. That is what you call God-realisation, Moksha or Nirvana. What is Nirvana? It is to be free from all desires and find within yourself the Reality which you cannot define. Ramdas was greatly charmed with the passages which he found in "The Light of Asia" where an attempt has been made to express what that great truth is. It is not an attempt but a confession of the incompetence of man to define that state. In Edwin Arnold's words it is said, "Do not dip this string of thought into the unfathomable. He who questions errs, he who answers errs." That is the indefinable which we are trying in vain to define in so many ways. You can experience it but you cannot express it. When final realisation comes to you, it is difficult to describe what it is, if you are asked to do so. We can only express it by negation and not by assertion. The same thing has been said in the Hindu scriptures. If anybody is asked to describe what the state of Moksha is from

one's own experience, he can express it only by silence, because it is not anything that can be expressed. So also you will find in the teachings of great sages and saints that the Reality cannot be described or understood by the help of the mind.

The Great Teachers are our Guides

But in order to raise ourselves to that state, we have to follow many ways and means, as the mind cannot at once take a leap into that infinite existence. We must have some help or prop by which we can climb up to that state. Who can help us ? The great incarnations of the world like Krishna, Buddha, Jesus and Mohammed have realised this great truth themselves. If we follow their teachings or even meditate on them — because they are so holy—we shall be able to reach that state. We must take them as embodiments of that Reality, and have perfect allegiance to them. We cannot hang on to the air and try to find out what that Reality is. If we try to approach the Truth direct, we shall never succeed. These great teachers or Avatars are the mediums of help for us. They have actually demonstrated before us how to live in that supreme state and experience.

Therefore, it is said in the scriptures that from Saguna worship we must go to the Nirguna, from the personal to the impersonal. We have got the images of Buddha, Krishna or Jesus before us to enlighten us, and ultimately they make us go beyond form and realise the supreme, nameless, formless, all-pervading Spirit, which activates the whole universe and which expresses itself as the whole universe. If we have the full

realisation of the Truth, we can transcend all diversity and be living always in unity and oneness. Therefore, Divine love is what we have to practise in order to free ourselves really from the thraldom of ignorance and bondage of birth and death and attain a state of tranquillity born of the realisation of our immortal and infinite existence.

AT THE SRI KANDASWAMI VIDYALAYA, PUNDULOYA.
26th December, 1954.

God the only Reality

Beloved Devotees of God,—You all know that we are living in a transitory world. All beings, creatures and things here pass away after a short time. In this vanishing show there is only one Truth or one Reality. That is God. If we have God, then we have the eternal Truth with us. When we are born, we do not bring anything with us, and do not take anything with us when we quit this life. Therefore, living as we do in this changing world we should devote ourselves to God. By remembering God alone we can get real happiness and peace. If we forget Him, we find ourselves beset with worries, cares and anxieties at every step in this life. Our real father and mother and friend is God. Therefore, we should never forget Him. We must have full devotion for Him, and trust and faith in Him.

How to win Grace

What are the conditions and qualifications for getting His grace? There is only one qualification and that is pure love and devotion for Him. We are not expected to be rich, to belong to a high race, to hold a high position in life or to be learned in Shastras and literature. These things are not necessary to qualify us for the grace of God. It is not even necessary that we should be human beings in order to have devotion for Him. The following are instances in point :—

Rishi Narada was the son of a servant woman, but he became a great devotee of Vishnu. Nandanar was born a Pariah, but Chidambara Nataraja was highly pleased with him and gave him His Darshan. Guha, a simple boatman who lived in the forest, became one of the greatest devotees of Sri Ramachandra. Valmiki was a robber. By the contact of sage Narada he was blessed with God's name, he reached the highest spiritual eminence and is known as Maharishi Valmiki. Dhruva, Prahlada, and Nachiketas were only young children, but they received the grace of God and became immortal. Then again we have the fisherwoman, Shabari, who became the favourite devotee of Sri Ramachandra, who ate at her hands the fruit tasted by her, in her forest home. Fishermen in Palestine became the true disciples of Jesus Christ. Bhakta Sudama, a Brahmin, was living in a small hut in a very poor condition. But Lord Krishna looked upon him as His favourite devotee and gave him His Darshan and full blessings. Kabir, though a Muslim, took to the repetition of Ramnam and had the vision of Rama. In India there were great saints born in low families and were engaged in very humble and unassuming professions like shoe-making, pottery, tailoring and ordinary shopkeeping. There are instances of animals who had attained rare devotion for God; Hanuman among monkeys, Jambavan among bears, and Gajendra among elephants.

So it is clear from all these instances that God does not look to the learning, power, riches or any other worldly qualifications for bestowing His grace. What-

ever our situation, position, race, caste, creed and other conditions may be, we can get the vision of God and entitle ourselves to His grace, provided we have got wholehearted devotion for Him and possess implicit trust in Him.

Name—the Key to Devotion

All the great souls, whose names Ramdas just now mentioned, became ardent devotees through complete surrender to God attained by repeating His glorious and holy name. Those who have work all day long and have no time to do any stipulated form of Sadhana, can take to this simplest method of remembering God, viz., the ceaseless repetition of His holy name. When we are working with our hands, we can go on chanting His name with the tongue and, depend upon it, he who does this will have perfect peace and bliss in his heart. He will be under the protection and grace of God in every way and all his troubles will cease. God has given the assurance to His devotees that those who remember Him always are looked after by Him in every way. From the innumerable instances in the lives of saints and devotees all over the world it is evident that, in times of difficulties, God came to their rescue in a wonderful way. So our true saviour, friend and helper is God and none else in the world. Such a God we should not forget. Therefore, Ramdas advises you all that you should constantly remember Him by taking His sweet, powerful and glorious name. You may take any name of God, because all the names are of the supreme being who is the Lord of the universe.

AT THE SHEEN GROUP SCHOOL, PUNDULOYA, 26th December, 1954.

Ramdas' Advice—Sing God's Name

Beloved Devotees of God,—Ramdas cannot find words to express his joy on this occasion of his visit to your place, as you have poured on him your pure love and devotion. For Ramdas you are, veritably, the manifestations of his God—Ram. Truly, your hearts are filled with the purest emotions of love and devotion. It appears you are absorbed in today's function to such an extent that you have forgotten your bodies and all surroundings. This occasion reminds Ramdas of the love and devotion which the Gopis of Brindavan manifested towards Sri Krishna. Ramdas wishes that this enthusiasm and devotion should be sustained and should continue with you at other times also. It is also quite evident that due to this devotional outburst you are now enjoying infinite joy and peace.

Your joy and enthusiasm have come out from your own hearts. So you must understand that the God that you seek, the God of real happiness and peace, is dwelling in the hearts of all of you. We, who have come to you, are merely instrumental in invoking that Divine Spirit within you and making you not only aware of it but also enjoy the blissful union with it. The inherent beauty and fragrance of the lotus flower is revealed in the presence of the sun, but the beauty and fragrance belong to the lotus itself. So it is that God who is all bliss, love, purity and peace is residing in your hearts.

To be always conscious of His presence in you and to feel His constant fellowship and union, the only way is to remember Him constantly. To keep His divine remembrance always in your mind, the easy way is to chant His holy name. In this Kali Yuga, the repetition of God's name is the only way to salvation or liberation. For taking the holy name of God there is no difficulty or expenditure, and no particular condition, situation and time are necessary. Everybody, whether of a high caste or low caste, old or young, rich or poor, can chant the holy Name. Therefore Ramdas advises you all to form an association here and meet together periodically and sing the names of God at fixed hours, according to the rules or regulations which the conveners of such an association may lay down. So, when all of you assemble in the name of God, you will conceive love and affection towards each other, and harmony will prevail amongst you all and that will bring about all-round peace and prosperity and every good which God could confer upon you.

Most of you who have assembled here today are workers in estates and factories. Ramdas advises you all that even when your hands are active in work, your tongue should be repeating God's name. Keep the name of God constantly with you. If you do this, there will be all-round happiness and prosperity for every one of you and the entire community will be receiving divine blessings and grace, just as we do from the clouds that are abundantly pouring rains on us now. May the Almighty Lord shower His blessings upon you all and grant you continued devotion for Him and stamp His divine name on your tongue permanently!

AT THE RESIDENCE OF SRI K. KUMARAVEL, PUNDULOYA.

27th December, 1954.

The Goal and the Way

Beloved Friends, — Ramdas has been told that he should deliver a message today because it happens to be the 33rd year of Ramdas' renunciation of the worldly life. Now he wishes to speak to you on God-realisation.

You all know that the chief aim of our life is to realise God. The precious human life is intended only for achieving that goal. All of you who have assembled here have got an aspiration to realise this great Truth. Ramdas does not say that you are not aware of the existence of God within yourselves. You have some consciousness of it, but you must have that Truth fully revealed in the manifest life.

The Goal

Knowledge by itself does not enable us to enjoy God. It is like having the knowledge of sweets in a room. By the mere knowledge of its existence in a room we are not satisfied. That knowledge neither satisfies our taste nor appeases our hunger. We have to go to the room and eat the sweets. Then alone we get the real benefit of the knowledge of the sweets. So also, it is not enough if we merely know that the Divine is within us, but we must enjoy Him. We must bring Him out so that He may fill and permeate our manifest being and grant us perfect bliss, peace and freedom in our active life. This is important. God is

within us. The divine Self is within us. He is not extraneous to us. We are already He. We have only to experience this truth. The attainment of the knowledge of Truth is called Jnana. Through Jnana we know we are the Self, and that Self and God are not different. Divine consciousness must enter into our senses, our mind, our intellect and heart and every part of our being, so that we may become perfect embodiments of the Self or the Divine. This is the goal we have to achieve.

In order to achieve this goal it is essential that we must constantly and consciously remember God within us. It is this remembrance that grants us not only the knowledge of Him, but also makes us feel and experience Him in every part of our being and in all the activities of our life. This is the supreme realisation we have to achieve. Hence, remembrance or meditation of the Truth is essential. We must not allow the mind to stray away from the central thought of the Divinity dwelling within us. God is within us and our self and He are one and the same. This consciousness must be with us at all times so that we may live, move and have our being in Him.

Not by effort

Ramdas casually read a few lines today, written by Dilip Kumar Roy, in the *Vedanta Kesari*, about his Darshan of Sri Ramana Maharshi. Ramana Maharshi, it appears, said that he did no Sadhana. The moment he left home and went to Arunachala, he felt that he was free. He was lost in the infinite expanse of Divine existence

and thereafter he lived in that state till the very last. He got this experience without any effort, because this state is not to be got by effort, but through the dawn of knowledge in a mysterious way. We may call it divine grace. Whatever that be, when knowledge comes we are lost in the radiance of the supreme Reality, which is universal and infinite and eternal, and thereafter we live in that state perennially.

This experience is known as Samadhi or Sahaja Avastha, and there is no fear for us then of being entangled again in wordly life, or of being attached to the things of the world. We are self-satisfied, contented, as we are always filled with divine peace and joy. This state, the *summum bonum* of life, is God-realisation, which means attainment of the Divine, not merely inwardly, but outwardly also. Our bodies then become the temples of God, or the vehicles through which God reveals Himself. Now we become the very embodiments or incarnations of Divinity. This is the goal we have to aim at.

The Way

The way to it is continuous remembrance and meditation of God within us. When He has given us the aspiration to have Him, that itself is a great blessing. We must not allow that aspiration to cool down. We must fan the flame by every means possible and intensify the aspiration to such an extent that our thought always flows to Him within us, and our mind gets merged in Him. Till then, the intensity of the aspiration must be kept up. Society of saints, reading

of scriptures which will inspire us, doing works which will expand our vision and heart, and Bhajans and Kirtans which purify our emotions and elevate us and thereby gradually make us forget our body and become conscious of the Divinity within us, are some of the ways to intensify the aspiration. Now, as the body is forgotten and the ego-sense is dissolved, we feel we are not the body, but the all-pervading Self. We also behold the universe as the manifestation or expression of this Self. We now come to know that the body is nothing but the concrete expression or embodiment of the Divine, the Self within us.

Value of Satsang

We should not be aspiring for Him on the one hand and, on the other, living and doing things in a way derogatory to the fulfilment of that aspiration. Satsang is the most important thing. In Satsang, that intensity rises to fever heat and all the desires of the mind disappear, at least for the time being, and attachment to worldly things slackens considerably. We now feel like a bird set free from the cage. We forget the body and all our worries when we are in the company of saints, absorbed in the singing of God's name and glories. This leads to the realisation of the bliss within us, through the awareness of the Self. Through the experience of that Self, manifest also everywhere about us, all distinctions are completely eliminated and we feel one with all ; because the emotions raised to a divine fervour enable us to transcend the physical consciousness and thereby sink all differences which are born of ignorance and are the cause of discord in

the world owing to our feeling that we are merely bodies or individual entities. But as soon as we leave the company of saints, we are prone to relapse into the old state. We must therefore take care that we do not go back to the old ways of life. We must maintain that higher vision and experience even afterwards by continuously remembering the Divine within us and thus tuning ourselves with Him. Whenever the mind goes astray, it should be brought back and made to meditate upon the Reality.

Therefore, the question came in the Bhagavad Gita—Arjuna asked Krishna—about the nature of the mind and how it could be controlled. You know the mind plays tricks with us; it is always restless and forgets God. Although we sit silently to remember Him, our mind refuses to think of Him, to concentrate and meditate on Him. We must adopt some means to bring the mind under control. Arjuna asked Krishna, "O Krishna, You are telling me so many things about Truth that appeal to me, but I find it very difficult to concentrate upon the Truth residing within myself." Then Lord Krishna said, "I admit, O Arjuna, that this mind is difficult to control, but there is a way to do it. You must have Abhyasa or practice, which must be accompanied by Vairagya or a spirit of detachment from the objects of the world."

Abhyasa and Vairagya

We must tell the mind, "O mind, how foolish you are! Why are you thinking of the perishable things, when you are sitting here to meditate on the eternal

Truth. Truth alone can give you real joy. Therefore, attune yourself to It." Thinking on these lines, we can keep the mind detached and free from dwelling on the perishable, the impermanent and the unreal. If we develop this attitude towards the external life, it will be easy for us to achieve concentration through practice. Otherwise, concentration becomes difficult. Without concentration and meditation we cannot realise that we are the Self, the Atman, the immortal Reality. Realising the Self, we see the whole universe as one image of the Self. The diversity, with which we are obsessed, disappears like the mist before the sun. So Abhyasa and Vairagya are necessary. We must draw the mind within by remembering and contemplating upon the Reality constantly.

Panacea for all Ills

Ramdas found for himself that the repetition of the Mantra which the Guru gave him was a panacea for all the ills of the mind. It stopped the wavering of the mind, freed it from all undesirable thoughts, and made it perfectly serene, calm and tranquil. When the mind was stilled, he began to perceive and experience God within. It was in this condition that God bade him leave Mangalore and go on a tour. At that time his attachment to worldly objects was completely dead. He went round almost the whole of India, in the course of which he had to go into solitude and undergo severe austerities only with the object of establishing permanently this consciousness of the Reality.

Later on, he knew that this was not all. The manifest life has to be seen not as a diversified pheno-

menon, but as a uniform cosmic Reality. This vision and realisation were also granted to him in order to prepare him as a vehicle to reveal the message of universal love and service. God has to be realised in all His fullness and perfection ; not merely as the Self, not merely as the manifestation, but both as the Self and the manifestation, and also as One beyond the manifest and the unmanifest—the perfect, all-inclusive all-transcendent Godhead. After giving this fullness of divine experience, God set Ramdas to the task of conveying to the world this message. From that time, he has been going from place to place at the bidding of his Master, and delivering this message to everybody with whom he comes in contact. He has been telling all, from his own experience, that the repetition of the holy Mantra is a wonderful remedy for all the diseases of the mind, such as lust, hate, greed, attachment, pride and envy.

Mind is full of evil. The mind may be made healthy and freed from evil by the repetition of God's name. The more you repeat His name, the more you become conscious of Him within you. The dark forces are conquered and the mind becomes still, pure and transparent. Then the radiance, peace and joy of the Divine reveal themselves and you become like a glass case in which a brilliant light is kept. Otherwise, you are like a mud vessel inside which a lamp is burning. The mud vessel being opaque, the light does not shine out. You must make this human vehicle perfectly luminous with the light of God.

No desires left

In this supreme state, no desires are left in us. The world is seen as the concrete expression of the universal Truth, as our own Self. When everything is our own Self, how can we desire for anything? When we see something apart from us, then alone a desire for it arises. In God-realisation where is the question of 'I' and 'You'? Where is the question of separation from one another, even physically? We see everything as the manifestation of God. If we look within, there is the one universal Spirit or Self pervading everywhere. If we look without, there is the same Self manifest everywhere. All differences, divisions and diversity are utterly false in the realm of God.

So the aspiration, which God has given, should not be allowed to cool down or dwindle to nothing. Intensify it day by day until at last it reaches the pitch where ignorance leaves you, giving place to the brilliance of the Truth which pervades your entire being, and you see the whole universe filled with the same radiance and joy. *Sarvam-Khalvidam-Brahma*—"All this is verily Brahman." This is the great utterance of the Rishis of old. There is nothing but an ocean of Ananda, and in this ocean the waves or forms are rising and falling. What kind of ecstasy one should be having day and night when one has reached this blessed state! There is no higher experience in the path of spiritual achievement than this. You rise to the very peak of spiritual height beyond which you have nothing more to attain. It is completeness. It is *Purnam*, which means fullness or perfection. There is no insufficiency

or defect in it; no incompetency or, what you call, inefficiency in it. Everything is perfect and full, because there is no sense of diversity, no sense of separation. Therefore, you must rise to the peak of Advaita, which has been rightly held as the highest spiritual illumination and experience.

Some of the saints have preached Dvaita or duality. But it must be taken only as a means to reach Advaita or non-duality. Jesus has stated : "I and my Father are one." The Sufis say, "Soul and God are one." Buddha speaks about the only One in which all diverse phenomenal life disappears completely. Many other philosophers too have preached nothing but Advaita as the goal of spiritual attainment and realisation.

Divine Doctor

Ignorance is disease. Realisation is health. We must cure ourselves of that ignorance by taking the proper remedy for it from the divine doctor. Guru is the divine doctor who heals us by giving us the knowledge of the Self, of our real existence and being. What is the medicine ? God's name. Let us always keep it on our tongue and it will purify us through and through, and dispelling ignorance from our heart, will grant us the knowledge of the Divine, and fill us with bliss and joy.

Since Ramdas has experienced this bliss and peace, when he sees people miserable, his heart aches for them and he goes about asking them why they should remain unnecessarily unhappy. Why should they not meditate and think of God constantly and get awakened to the

awareness of Him within them and enjoy infinite peace and bliss?

There are some people who raise themselves into Samadhi and come down from Samadhi. This is not the highest spiritual experience. You must be ever in the state of perfect poise and balance, in which there is no rise or fall. This is Brahma-Sakshatkar. You watch the lives of those who have reached the Sahaja state. They have no special time for Bhajan or meditation. Many people ask Ramdas when his meditation time is. Ramdas does not know. They ask what Puja he is doing. Ramdas does not know. He possesses a consciousness in which he does not feel he is different from the Divine Being. When there are two, there is such a thing as Sadhana; but when you know there is only One, who is to do Sadhana and for what? This is the state which we have to achieve. We must keep this goal in view and work up our life for inviting divine grace.

Bring down Grace

Your work is only to bring down divine grace. You call on God, sing of Him, and you get a strange bliss and peace. This is the result of His grace. This is the only way of approach to Him. Take His name. Pray to Him. Cry to Him. Sing His glories. Raise yourself into your higher nature in which alone you meet God. Then you will be filled with the light, power, wisdom and joy of the Divine. It is not after getting detached from the world that you should think of God. By thinking of God alone you get automatically detached.

Bhakti gives rise to Vairagya. Bhakti is the root. Vairagya is the tree. Jnana is the flower. Parabhakti is the fruit. Parabhakti is an experience which grants us the vision of God in and as the universe.

AT THE SRIPADA COLLEGE, HATTON.

28th December, 1954.

Devotion to God

Beloved Friends,—Ramdas is now going to talk to you on devotion to God. You know human life is a precious gift of God. In this rare life we should not forget God. God is our real father and mother. When we came into this world we did not bring anything with us and when we depart from this life we do not take anything with us. So nothing in this world belongs to us in reality. God alone is our real master, mother and friend. We have come from Him and we go back to Him We cannot therefore forget Him throughout this life. There is so much misery and suffering in the world, only because people have forgotten their divine mother and father. If we remember Him constantly, the great advantage we can derive is that our heart will be filled with peace and joy. When we attain inward peace and bliss, we shall be able to move with our fellow-beings in love, harmony and friendship. We shall not then make any distinction of caste, creed or religion.

There is only one God

You all know that there are four great religions in the world. They are Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity. All the great teachers, around whom these religions have been founded, preached the same truth. They told us that we should surrender ourselves to God and attain everlasting love and peace. God, whom we

seek and aspire to realise, is dwelling in the hearts of of us all. We become conscious of Him when our hearts are thoroughly purified by constant remembrance. Through God-remembrance alone we can purify our heart. The easy way to remember Him is to chant His holy name. You may chant any name of God, because all the Names that are prescribed by different religions are of one God. Muslims call Him Allah, Hindus call Him Rama, Krishna, Shiva and so on and Christians call Him Jehovah or Jesus. Even though water is called by different names at different places, it does not change in nature but remains the same. In the same way, the all-pervading, eternal God is called by various names by various people belonging to different religions.

Feel Humble before God

We know God is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. As we are repeating the name of such a God, we should bring into our mind His greatness and glory, and feel humble before Him. This humility will ultimately lead to self-surrender. When we surrender ourselves to Him, all our sins are wiped off and we enjoy infinite bliss and peace. Therefore we must utilise as much of our time as possible in remembering God by taking His holy name and praying to Him to guide us always on the path of righteousness. God cannot be ours until we are pure in thought, word and deed. This is what Lord Buddha has been telling us. Lord Krishna, in the Bhagavad Gita, says that we can realise God only when we are free from lust, greed and wrath. Jesus Christ has told us that we have to

be pure in heart and then alone we shall see God. We find the same teachings in the Koran also as preached by Prophet Mohammed.

Attain perfect Unity

Knowing that all religions lead to the same God, we must mutually love each other and live in harmony and peace, because God is not different for different people. The same God is the father and mother of all people in the world. In the light of our devotion to this universal God, we must dissolve all differences and quarrels and join together as members of one family and create universal brotherhood, which will never admit of any discord, dissension or war. We cannot unite ourselves and feel one with each other, except by our accepting the Divine parent as the creator and as the supreme ruler of the entire world. If we say that we have faith in and love for God, but do not love our brethren, we are not telling the truth. So the true test of our love for God is our love for humanity. In other words, a lover of God is a lover of humanity. If we are true devotees of God, our hearts will be purged of all evil and His power will enter into us and we shall look upon all as our brothers and sisters.

Name is the Path

To attain this supreme state of perfect unity with all life and God and to enjoy bliss, we have only to take, with all faith, the glorious and all-powerful name of God. For taking His name, you do not have to go to particular places like temples. You can have the Name

always on your lips wherever you are, whether you are working in the field, estates or offices. Ramdas does not mean to say you should not go to the places of worship like temples, but you should have an independent way of communion with God, whenever you want, by repeating His name. Those of you who are working with your hands can have the Name on your lips even when you are working. Others who are doing intellectual work may take the Name when they are free from work. There is no greater purifier than the name of God. When you become pure by the repetition of God's name, you will feel conscious of God within you. The consciousness of the Divine within us comes through His grace. His grace comes to us through the constant remembrance of Him and our utter devotion to Him. In conclusion, Ramdas invokes the Lord of the universe to shower on you all His choicest blessings so that you may constantly remember Him and by that remembrance ever remain peaceful and in every way blessed.

AT THE KATHIRESAN COLLEGE, NAWALAPITIYA.
29th December, 1954.

God and Man

Beloved Devotees,—Ramdas is going to speak to you now about God and man's relation to Him. You know God is the father and mother of all people on this earth. When we consider ourselves to be children of our physical parents, we remain only on the physical plane, and in that state we think we are merely bodies. When death comes we are afraid, as we feel that by the death of the body we shall also die. In reality, we have come from God and we have to return to Him. Therefore it is necessary that throughout our life we must remember this Divine parent. By such remembrance we become conscious that we are the children of the eternal father and mother. Since we are the children of the eternal we have to be ourselves eternal also. An eternal father and mother can give birth only to an eternal child. In the earlier stages, when we pray to God as our father and mother, we take him to be some great Being outside us. We place before us an image or picture of Him and carry on our devotional practices. As we go on worshipping the image or picture before us, our mind gets purified.

At this juncture we come across our liberator—God in human form, who is called Guru. Guru brings us in contact with God within us. By the grace of the Guru we get the awareness, knowledge and Darshan of God. Guru also takes us a step further. By his grace he removes the veil between us and God and makes us

realise that we are one with Him. This realisation of oneness with God is called Jnana. This is the state when Jiva becomes Shiva. When we have realised that we are one with God, we see the whole universe as the manifestation of that God. Verily, we and God are never separate. It is through ignorance we feel we are separate from Him. When we are free from ignorance, we know that we are not only one with Him but also that we have always been one with Him.

Once Sri Ram asked his great devotee Hanuman, who he was. Then Hanuman replied that as body he was Ramchandra's servant, as Jiva he was a part of Him and as Atman he was Rama Himself. So, essentially, our self is not different from God. This is the realisation which we have to attain by devotion to God and by keeping up our relationship with Him as father and mother. By His grace it is that we raise ourselves from our individual separate being into the transcendent state of oneness with Him. Therefore we should, in the first place, cultivate intense love and devotion for Him. If we are continuously having the consciouness or awareness of the Divine within us, at the time of shuffling off this human body we shall merge into His resplendent being just as a river mingles with the ocean and becomes the ocean itself. This is the highest achievement which we must aim at when we are on the path of devotion to God. This human life must be utilised only for this purpose. So Ramdas advises you all to keep God's name and God-remembrance always with you with the sole object of realising this goal of perfect union with and absorption in Him.

AT THE PUSHPADANA SOCIETY HALL, KANDY.
30th December, 1954.

Under the auspices of the Saiva Mahasabha, Kandy.

Purpose of Human Life

Beloved Friends,—Today Ramdas is going to speak to you on the purpose of human life. You all know that human life is a rare acquisition or it can even be called a precious gift of God. The main object of human life is to realise God. If we know this fact and yet spend our lives in trying to acquire objects of enjoyment, we are no better than animals. We shall not then have utilised the precious powers which God has given us, such as the power of understanding, etc., to any purpose. We are all striving to attain happiness. But this happiness, we know from experience, cannot be gained by acquiring the objects outside us. Real happiness comes to us only when we have realised God's presence within us, when we have realised our real being and existence. To know this Self and to live in the Self, act in the Self and behold the Self everywhere is the main object of this life. But to attain this supreme goal is not easy, as we have developed a crystallised egoism, which prevents us from realising this truth. By the elimination of the ego-sense alone we can realise the supreme glory of the indwelling truth. Therefore, sages and wise men tell us that we should always glorify God, think of His greatness, His omnipotence and omnipresence. When we do so, we realise our own littleness and the ego-sense dwindles

into insignificance. Therefore, to eliminate the ego-sense, the easiest way is to remember God and His glories constantly. As we go on remembering Him, all the impurities of the mind will disappear, as also the ego along with them. Then we come to realise that we are the eternal Self ourselves; that we and God are one as the universal Reality. It is in this state that we attain immortal bliss, peace and freedom. Our vision of that supreme Reality should be such as to attain this blessed state. Our mind must be constantly thinking of Him or remembering Him.

The easiest way to stamp on our mind His remembrance is the repetition of His holy name with all love, faith and devotion. The Name is that of the universal God who dwells within us. As we go on remembering Him by repeating His name, we become conscious of His existence within us. Our sense of separation from God gradually disappears and our attachment to particular persons and things also vanishes. Our vision becomes universal and our heart flows out with love towards all beings and creatures alike. So long as we feel separate from our fellow-beings, we are separate from God, because it is God who dwells in the hearts of all beings. So a lover of God is a lover of humanity. By the realisation of the Atman, we shed the sense of separation from our fellow-beings, and when we feel one with them we love all beings alike, and it is then that we rise above the pairs of opposites and dwell always in a state of perfect peace and happiness.

Sama Darshan

In almost every chapter of the Bhagavad Gita this supreme state has been described by Lord Krishna. He stresses the truth that if we want to free our life from the tangle of bondage and ignorance, we must rise above the pairs of opposites and attain that state which is called *samata* or *sama darshan,* which can be had only by *Atma-sakshatkar* or Self-realisation. Therefore, it behoves everyone of us to strive to attain this supreme goal. Our desire for perfect happiness can be fulfilled only in this way. All the forces of our being and all the activities of our life must conform to the purpose of attaining this supreme goal. That is why we are asked to be kind, good, forgiving and helpful to our fellow-beings. Hatred, discord and quarrels accentuate the differences among us and stabilise in us the ego-sense which is the cause of our misery. For the attainment of real happiness we must all unite our little selves with the universal Self and melt the individuality away. This is what is described in the Bhagavad Gita, in the last chapter, as self-surrender. सर्वे धर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज— "Abandoning all paths come to me alone for shelter." This surrender dissolves the ego-sense in us and grants us the vision of God within and without. We know then that we are not merely individuals or bodies but the universal Spirit and existence. Worries, cares, anxieties and fears leave us completely. The all-pervading, eternal God will be ever with us, protect us and guide us in every way. He will not only dwell in us but pervade our entire being, physical, mental and intellectual.

Need for Spiritual Practice

All our spiritual practices, all our devotional efforts, should go to purify the mind in order to attain perfect peace, happiness and freedom. Moksha is held as the goal by the Hindus, and Nirvana by the Buddhists. They are not different. In both cases, our desires must be completely extinct and our body-notion must disappear, and we must transcend the relative and reach the absolute. The salvation held out by other religions like Christianity is also of the same kind. Now we know what we have to attain in this life. Let us, with all our heart, strive to be free from the tangle of bondage and ignorance, attain immortality and enjoy supreme peace. You may call God by any name but He is one. All religions, all people, all countries and all races have only one God. Really, God is without name and form. He is infinite, eternal truth and existence. He has come down on the earth, for the liberation of mankind, in so many forms. We have to approach the supreme Reality through those forms and make ourselves free from bondage. We must follow the instructions and teachings which they have left behind for us. When repeating God's name we can take any name of God. He, who keeps God's name continuously on his lips, is free from ego-sense and is pure in mind. God's name has wonderful potency.

Try God's Name

If anyone of you gives a fair trial to God's name, you can find out for yourself how efficacious it is in

quelling the desires and waves of the mind and taking it to the higher consciousness beyond the body-notion. Its power is so great that it can lift you to the highest spiritual eminence. It can grant you universal vision and fill you with perennial spiritual ecstasy. So Ramdas' advice to you is to have the glorious name of God always on your lips. This is the easiest way to commune with God within you. This Name can be repeated by everybody. We can take the Name which we hold dear and for which we have a particular liking and love. Ramdas is telling you this from his own personal experience. We know, mind is very difficult to control, but if you make the mind repeat constantly the Divine name, you will see that it can be very easily brought under control. It can purify and still the mind. When the mind becomes still you become aware of God's existence within you. Therefore the repetition of God's name, which is the easiest to practise, may be taken up by one and all of you. Ramdas does not say that you should not have recourse to other practices like worship, meditation and so on, but you can take the Name constantly at other times, when you may not be able to engage yourself in such other practices. The Name can be on your tongue at all times and in all conditions.

Forgetfulness of God has been the cause of so much misery in the lives of many persons. Therefore the chief object of our life should be the keeping up of a continuous stream of Divine remembrance in our mind. Such remembrance will give us real peace and happiness. This is not a Sadhana by which you are to

get something at a later date. You get your results or fruits immediately you start this. The moment you repeat God's name with all love and devotion, that very instant you will be drinking veritable nectar itself. God is Bliss itself. God and His name are not different.

AT THE SINDHI COMMUNITY CENTRE, COLOMBO.
31st December, 1954.

Ramdas' Message—The Divine Name

Beloved Devotees,—Ramdas' parting message to you is the message of the Divine name. Guru and the Name which the Guru gave were the two great saviours that liberated Ramdas from the bondage of ignorance and granted him perfect bliss and peace. He who has always God's name on his lips is a blessed soul. God's name is sweeter than nectar. If you keep it on your tongue always, you will be drinking its sweetness and that sweetness will enter into every part of your being and intoxicate you with the Divine emotions—peace and bliss.

Name—The Only Saviour

Ramdas can tell you from his personal experience that, so far as he was concerned, he found that there was no easier, greater, surer and more efficacious Sadhana for attaining God than the repetition or chanting of His glorious name. This is definite. It is not his experience alone, but the experience of all the sages and saints of India and the world In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna has said that, of all the Yajnas, Japa Yajna is the highest. In the Kali Yuga, there is no other way for salvation than the repetition of Hari's name. That is the only saviour and he who takes the Name is sure of salvation, not at a distant date, or in another birth, but in this birth and at this very moment.

Some say that the Divine name does not taste sweet to them. When Ramdas was drinking the sweetness of the Name, friends used to come to him. Ramdas glorified the Name before them, telling them that the Name was very, very sweet, but the friends said, "The sweetness may be for you, but not for us. We repeat the same Name, but do not derive as much peace and happiness as you do. What is the reason? How can we also find its sweet taste? What is the defect in us? What is the remedy?" Ramdas had to answer them in the words of a great saint who has composed a song on the subject. The purport of the song is: "The moment your head touches the dust of a saint's feet, all your desires for the objects of the senses will disappear, and then only when you repeat God's name, it will taste sweet to you. And as you go on repeating the Name, the joy proceeding from it goes on increasing until it fills you through and through, and you see God in your heart, your eyes shed tears of joy, and love wells up in your heart for all beings." This is the process by which we can taste the sweetness of the name of God and realise God within our own hearts.

You know that when a man is stricken with a certain kind of fever, if you give him sugar, he finds it bitter and throws it away. But when he is free from fever, the same sugar tastes sweet. So, we have a disease in the mind and that is called Vasana—clinging to the objects of the senses, desires for the *Pancha-vishayas* or the five kinds of objects which the senses crave for. The desires must go. So long as these

sense-desires are deep-rooted in our mind, the Name does not taste sweet. Therefore what we have to do first, when our mind seeks to find God, is to contact a saint, touch his feet and accept him as our spiritual guide and then receive the Name from him. Thereafter, we can see the marvellous effect the repetition produces in us. Our whole being will be flooded with peace and bliss. Our heart will be filled with love for all beings in the world. Our eyes will see God everywhere. The Name will free us from bondage, will give us peace and harmony in place of discord and disharmony. It will grant us light and dispel darkness. It will grant us immortality by conquest over death. Such is the glory of the Divine name !

The Ten Evils

Lord Buddha says, we are seized by ten evils. They are : three of the mind, four of the tongue and three of the body. Unless these ten evils are eradicated, we cannot see God, we cannot have His vision, or His realisation. The three evils of the mind are envy, hatred and scepticism ; four of the tongue are slandering, abusing, gossiping and lying ; three of the body are stealing, killing and adultery,

These ten evils are of thought, word and deed. In order to free ourselves from these evils, what are we to do ? We can take these ten evils as ten heads of the Ravana who is within us in the form of Abhiman or ego-sense. Who killed this ten-headed monster ? You know very well Rama did it. So, in order to destroy these ten evils in us, to destroy the ten-headed demon

in us, Ramnam is the weapon. He who repeats Ramnam constantly, you may depend upon it, would not have to destroy these evils one by one. This Name lays the axe at the very root of all the evils and makes us absolutely pure. It frees us from these evils, our ego-sense also vanishes, and we realise God within us, God without us and God everywhere about us. The whole universe will thereafter stand transformed before us as the very image of God. To this height of realisation the Divine name takes us. If we repeat the Name after having contacted a saint and touched the dust of his feet, then we shall see what glorious power this Name has. What a great influence it wields on us for our uplift, for the ultimate realisation of our real Self, which is the same as God !

Name is a precious jewel, which we should not lose when we have once gained it. If we take it, we must do so with all our heart, with all love and faith in its power. Sages and saints are never tired of singing the glories of the Name. We may find this out for ourselves. When we sit still and sing the Name and get our mind inebriated with its sweetness, our whole body will be permeated with a strange ecstasy in which our ego-sense and all low desires will disappear completely, and we shall be thoroughly purified. If we repeat the Name continuously, we shall be established in that state. We shall become the very image of God.

Name sweeter than Moksha

No other Sadhana can take you to this spiritual height. Other Sadhanas may raise you to Self-

realisation ; but they cannot infuse into you the joy of the Self permeating your entire being, entering not only your mind and intellect but also all your emotions, senses and body. Nay, every atom of your physisal frame will thrill with joy. That is why the saints approach God by taking His name, His sweet and glorious name, constantly. If you have it on your tongue continuously, you will be enjoying the sweetness of the Name without break, just as you get sweetness continuously when you keep a nectarine pill on your tongue. Such is the sweetness of the Name. Saints and devotees go to the length of saying, "Oh God, I do not even want You, but I want Your name. I am perfectly satisfied with the sweetness of Your name." The Name yields so much bliss that they do not want even the vision of God, but are contented and happy in repeating the Name. They say, "Oh God, I would wish to be born again and again in order to repeat Your name."

Moksha is not a thing to be attained. It is there already with you. But the sweetness of communion with God, through the repetition of His name is a rare acquisition. You are always liberated souls. You were never born and you never die and there is no such thing as liberating the Universal. Soul is ever free. Only you have to know it. When you know it, it is done. The sweetness you get from the Name is a different thing. By the mere knowledge of the Self your are not so happy as when you repeat the name of that supreme Reality within you. The Name brings out the divine sweetness to the surface, on the plane of the body,

senses and the mind, and it sweetens your entire life. That is why the Name has been reckoned as the greatest boon in the world.

Ramdas' one task, wherever he went, was to glorify the Name and tell everybody to take the Name; Rama, Krishna, Shiva or any Name one likes. See the power it wields over you, how it elevates you, illumines you and fills you with divine peace and joy.

Ramdas' Parting Message

So Ramdas' parting message to you is that you should take to the repetition of God's name. It is not enough to praise the Name by singing songs about it. You must act according to the teachings of the great saints. You should attempt to keep the Name constantly on your lips while walking, sitting, or doing any other physical work. Gradually, you will find that the Name takes possession of you. It is not that you take possession of the Name, but the Name takes possession of you. Then you will see how your mind refuses to wander here and there. It gets absorbed in the Name and derives immense peace and joy.

Contact of the Name is contact of God, because Name and God are not different. Name is God and God is Name. You will know it when you are repeating it, because the Name gives you unending peace and joy, immortal peace and bliss. This is the power of the Name. So you will never give it up once you have it. The mind will never thereafter run after the pleasures of the senses, like a thirsty person running to drink water from a mirage. You will find by experience that there

is no real joy in sense-objects. Real peace and bliss is within you and you can have direct experience of it. The Name makes God manifest in all your activities.

Ramdas was taken from place to place all over Ceylon and he met thousands of friends and talked to them about Jnana, Bhakti, Universal Love and Service, Unity of all Religions, etc. But his prime object, the burden of his song, as it were, was to spread the message of the Name everywhere, and that has been done. That is his favourite subject—the glory of the Name that was given to him by his compassionate and all-merciful Guru. So, have the name of God always on your lips.

THE END

Om Shantih, Shantih, Shantihi !

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(For details of the price of the above books and of translations of the same, please write to Anandashram)